



THE  
ILLIAD  
OF  
HOMER

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Translated by  
**ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;**

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*Te sequor, O Graæ gentis Decus ! inque tuis nunc  
Fixa pedum pono pressis vestigia signis :  
Non ita certandi cupidus, quæm propter Amorem,  
Quod Te imitari aveo.* ————— **Lucret.**

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**T H E**  
**F I F T E E N T H      B O O K**  
**O F    T H E**  
**I      L      I      A      D**

**VOL. IV.**

**B**



## THE A R G U M E N T

The fifth battle, at the ships ; and the acts  
Ajax.

JUPITER awaking, sees the Trojans repulsed from the trenches, Hector in a swoon, and Neptune at the heel of the Greeks : he is highly incensed at the artifice of Juno who appeases him by her submissions ; she is then sent Iris and Apollo. Juno repairing <sup>+1</sup> trembly of the Gods, attempts with extraordinary address to censure them against Jupiter ; in particular she touches Mars with violent resentment : he is ready to take arms, but is prevented by Minerva. Iris and Apollo obey the orders of Jupiter ; Iris commands Neptune to leave the battle, which, after much reluctance and passion, he consents. Apollo re-inspires Hector with vigour, brings him back to the battle, marches before him with his Ægis, and turns the fortune of the fight. He breaks down great part of the Grecian wall : the Trojans rush in, and attempt to fire the first line of the fleet, but are, as yet, repelled by the greatest Ajax with a prodigious slaughter.



I F T E E N T H B O O K  
**XVIII P 43**  
O F T H E

I L I A D.

**N**ow in swift flight they pass the trench pro-  
tected,

nd mark a chief lay gasping on the ground :  
e stopp'd and panted, where the chariots lie ;  
on their cheek, and horrour in their eye.

apwhile awaken'd from his dream of love,      5  
n Ida's summit sat imperial Jove :  
ound the wide fields he cast a careful view,  
here saw the Trojans fly, the Greeks pursue ;  
hese proud in arms, those scatter'd o'er the plain ;  
nd, 'midst the war, the Monarch of the main.  
ot far, great Hector on the dust he spies,      11  
lis sad associates round with weeping eyes)  
jecting blood, and panting yet for breath,  
lis senses wand'ring to the verge of death .  
he God beheld him with a pitying look,  
nd thus, incens'd, to fraudulent Junc spoke.      16



O thou, still adverse to th' eternal will,  
For ever studious in promoting ill !  
Thy arts have made the god-like Hector yield,  
And driv'n his conqu'ring squadrons from the field  
Can'st thou, unhappy in thy wiles ! withstand  
Our pow'r immense, and brave th' almighty light  
Hast thou forgot, when bound and fix'd on high,  
From the vast concave of the spangled sky,

v. 17.] Adam, in *Paradise Lost*, awakes from the embrace of Eve in much the same humour with Jupiter : this place. Their circumstance is very parallel ; each of them, as soon as his passion is over, appears of that resentment natural to a superior, who is imposed upon by one of less worth and sense than himself ; imposed upon in the worst manner, by flings of tenderness and love.

v. 23. *Hast thou forgot, &c.*] It is in the original this effect. *Have you forgot how you swung in the air when I hung a load of two anvils at your feet, and a chain of gold on your hands ?* " Though it is not my desire," says M. Dacier, to give a reason for every story in pagan theology, yet I cannot prevail upon myself pass over this in silence. The physical allegory seems very apparent to me : Homer mysteriously in this place explains the nature of the Air, which is Juno ; two anvils which she had at her feet are the two elements, earth and water : and the chains of gold about her hands are the aether, or fire which fills the superior region : the two grosser elements are called anvils, to shew us, that in these two elements only, are exercised. I do not know but that a moral allegory may here be found, as well as a physical one the poet by these masses tied to the feet of Juno, and by the chain of gold with which her hands were bound.



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 5

ung thee trembling, in a golden chain ; 25  
d all the raging Gods oppos'd in vain ?  
a'long I hurl'd them from th' Olympian hall,  
n'd in the whirl, and breathless with the fall.  
g god-like Hercules these deeds were done,  
r seem'd the vengeance worthy such a son ; 30  
hen by thy wiles induc'd, fierce Boreas tost  
ie shipwreck'd hero on the Coan coast :

"night signify, not only that domestick affairs should  
ike fetters detain the wife at home ; but that proper  
and beautiful works, like chains of gold, ought to em-  
ploy her hands."

The physical part this note belongs to Heraclides  
Atticus, Eustathius, and the scholiast : M. Dacier might  
e been contented with the credit of the moral one, as  
ems an observation no less singular in a lady.

23.] Eustathius tells us, that there were in some  
uscripts of Homer two verses, which are not to be  
nd in any of the printed editions, (which Hen. Ste-  
ns places here.)

Πρὸν γ' ὅτε δὴ σ' ἀπέλυσα ποδῶν, μέδεγες δ' ἐνὶ Τρῳη̄  
Κάββαλον ὄφρα πέλοιτο καὶ ἐσσομένοιστι πυθέσθαι.

these two verses Homer shews us, that what he says of  
punishment of Jūno was not an invention of his own,  
founded upon an ancient tradition. There had pro-  
ly been some statue of Juno with anvils at her feet,  
chains on her hands ; and nothing but chains and  
ils being left by time, superstitious people raised this  
y ; so that Homer only followed common report.  
at farther confirms it, is what Eustathius adds, that  
e were shewn near Troy certain ruins, which were  
to be the remains of these masses. Dacier.



## 6 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book

Him thro' a thousand forms of death I bore,  
And sent to Argos, and his native shore.  
Hear this, remember, and our fury dread,  
Nor pull th' unwilling vengeance on thy head  
Lest arts and blandishments successless prove,  
Thy soft deceits, and well-dissembled love.

The Thund'rer spoke : imperial Juno mourn'd  
And trembling, these submissive words return'd.

By ev'ry oath that Pow'rs immortal ties,  
The foodful earth, and all-infolding skies,  
By thy black waves, tremendous Styx ! that flow  
Thro' the drear realms of gliding ghosts below :

v. 43. *By thy black waves, tremendous Styx*] The that Homer here gives to Styx is *κατερέμενον, πούτερα* which I take to refer to its passage through the *μέδων* regions. But there is a refinement upon it, as if it nified *ex alto stillans*, falling drop by drop from on Herodotus, in his sixth book, writes thus. " The cadians say, that near the city Nonacris flows the ter of Styx, and that it is a small rill, which distill from an exceeding high rock, falls into a little ca or basin, environed with a hedge." Pausanias, had seen the place, gives light to this passage of Herodotus. " Going from Phereus, says he, in the country of the Arcadians, and drawing towards the West find on the left the city of Clytorus, and on the that of Nonacris, and the fountain of Styx, which from the height of a shaggy precipice falls drop drop up to an exceeding high rock, and before it traversed this rock, flows into the river Crathis : water is mortal both to man and beast, and therefore it is said to be an infernal fountain. Homer gives a place in his poems, and by the description which delivers, one would think he had seen it.



k XV      H O M E R's I L I A D.      7

the dread honours of thy sacred head,      45  
ad that unbroken vow, our virgin bed !

by my arts the Ruler of the main  
:ps Troy in blood, and ranges round the plain :  
his own ardour, his own pity sway'd  
help his Greeks ; he fought, and disobey'd : 50  
n'e had thy Juno better counsels giv'n,  
dad taught submission to the Sire of heav'n.

Think'st thou with me ? fair Empress of the  
skies !

wh' immortal Father with a smile replies !)  
nen soon the haughty Sea-god shall obey,      55  
or dare to a&t, but when we point the way.  
truth inspires thy tongue, proclaim our will  
yon' bright synod on th' Olympian hill ;

news the wonderful exactness of Homer, in the descrip-  
eon of places which he mentions. The Gods swore by  
nex, and this was the strongest oath they could take ;  
lit we likewise find that men too swore by this fatal  
cater : for Herodotus tells us, Cleomenes going to Ar-  
dia to engage the Arcadians to follow him in a war  
ainst Sparta, had a design to assemble at the city of  
nacris, and make them swear by the water of this  
fountain. *Dacier. Eustath. in Odyss.*

w.r. 47. *Not by my arts, &c.]* This apology is well con-  
oved ; Juno could not swear that she had not deceived  
ipiter, for this had been entirely false, and Homer  
ould be far from authorizing perjury by so great an  
ample. Juno, we see, throws part of the fault on  
eptune, by shewing she had not acted in concert with  
m. *Eustathius.*



### 3. HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

Our high decree let various Iris know,  
And call the God that bears the silver bow. 60  
Let her descend, and from th' embattl'd plain  
Command the Sea-god to his wat'ry reign :  
While Phœbus hastes, great Hector to prepare  
To rise afresh, and once more wake the war,  
His lab'ring bosom re-inspires with breath, 65  
And calls his senses from the verge of death.  
Greece chas'd by Troy ev'n to Achilles' fleet,  
Shall fall by thousands at the hero's feet.

v. 67. *Greece chas'd by Troy, &c.]* In this discourse of Jupiter, the poet opens his design, by giving his reader a sketch of the principal events he is to expect. As this conduct of Homer may to many appear no way artful, and since it is a principal article of the charge brought against him by some late French criticks, it will not be improper here to look a little into this dispute. The case will be best stated by translating the following passage from Mr. de la Motte's *Reflections sur la Critique*.

" I could not forbear wishing that Homer had an art,  
" which he seems to have neglected, that of preparing  
" events without making them known beforehand ; so  
" that when they happen, one might be surprised agree-  
" ably. I could not be quite satisfied to hear Jupiter,  
" in the middle of the Iliad, give an exact abridgment  
" of the remainder of the action. Madam Dacier al-  
" ludges as an excuse, that this past only between Jupi-  
" ter and Juno ; as if the reader was not let into the  
" secret, and had not as much share in the confidence."

She adds, that as we are capable of a great deal of pleasure at the representation of a tragedy which we have seen before, so the surprises which I require are no way necessary to our entertainment. This I think a pure piece o' sophistry : one may have two sorts of



## Book XV. H O M E R's. I L I A D.

,

He not untouched with pity, to the plain  
Shall send Patroclus, but shall send in vain.

70

" pleasure at the representation of a tragedy ; in the first  
" place, that of taking part in an action of importance  
" the first time it passes before our eyes, of being agi-  
" tated by fear and hope for the persons one is most  
" concerned about, and in fine, of partaking their feli-  
" city or misfortune, as they happen to succeed, or be  
" disappointed.

" This therefore is the first pleasure which the poet  
" should design to give his auditors, to transport them  
" by pathetick surprises which excite terrour or pity.  
" The second pleasure must proceed from a view of that  
" art which the author has shewn in raising the former.

" 'Tis true, when we have seen a piece already, we  
" have no longer that first pleasure of the surprises, at  
" least not in all its vivacity ; but there still remains  
" the second, which could never have its turn, had not  
" the poet laboured successfully to excite the first, it  
" being upon that indispensable obligation that we judge  
" of his art.

" The art therefore consists in telling the hearer only  
" what is necessary to be told him, and in telling him  
" only as much as is requisite to the design of pleasing  
" him. And although we know this already when we  
" read it a second time, we yet taste the pleasure of that  
" order and conduct which the art required.

" From hence it follows, that every poem ought to be  
" contrived for the first impression it is to make. If it  
" be otherwise, it gives us (instead of two pleasures  
" which we expected) two sorts of disgusts. the one,  
" that of being cool and untouched when we should be  
" moved and transported ; the other, that of perceiving  
" the defect which caused that disgust.



10 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

What youth he slaughters under Ilion's walls ?  
Ev'n my lov'd son, divine Sarpedon falls !

" This, in one word, is what I have found in , the  
" Iliad. I was not interested or touched by the ad ven-  
" tures, and I saw it was this cooling preparation that  
" prevented my being so."

It appears clearly that M. Dacier's defence no way excuses the poet's conduct : wherefore I shall add two or three considerations which may chance to set it in a better light. It must be owned that a surprise artfully managed, which arises from unexpected revolutions of great actions, is extremely pleasing. In this consists the principal pleasure of a romance, or well-writ tragedy. But besides this, there is in the relation of great events a different kind of pleasure, which arises from the artful unravelling a knot of actions, which we knew before in the gross. This is a delight peculiar to history, and epick poetry, which is founded on history. In these kinds of writing, a preceding summary knowledge of the evenis described, does no way damp our curiosity, but rather makes it more eager for the detail. This is evident in a good history, where generally the reader is affected with a greater delight in proportion to his preceding knowledge of the facts described : the pleasure in this case is like that of an architect's first view of some magnificent building, who was before well acquainted with the proportions of it. In an epick poem the case is of a like nature ; where, as if the historical fore-knowledge were not sufficient, the most judicious poets never fail to excite their reader's curiosity by some small sketches of their design ; which, like the outlines of a fine picture, will necessarily raise in us a greater desire to see it in its finished colouring.

Had our author been inclined to follow the method of managing our passions by surprises, he could not well have succeeded by this manner in the subject h : chose to



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 15

Vanquish'd at last by Hector's lance he lies.  
Then, nor 'till then, shall great Achilles rise : }  
And lo ! that instant, god-like Hector dies. 75 }  
From that great hour the war's whole fortune turns,  
Pallas assists, and lofty Ilion burns.  
Not 'till that day shall Jove relax his rage,  
Nor one of all the heav'nly host engage  
In aid of Greece. The promise of a God 80  
I gave, and seal'd it with th' almighty nod,  
Achilles' glory to the stars to raise ;  
Such was our word, and Fate the word obeys.

The trembling Queen (th' almighty order giv'n)  
Swift from th' Idæan summit shot to heav'n. 85  
As some way-faring man, who wanders o'er  
In thought, a length of lands he trod before,

write upon, which being a story of great importance, the principal events of which were well known to the Greeks, it was not possible for him to alter the ground-work of his piece; and probably he was willing to mark sometimes by anticipation, sometimes by recapitulations, how much of his story was founded on historical truths, and that what is superadded were the poetical ornaments.

There is another consideration worth remembering on this head, to justify our author's conduct. It seems to have been an opinion in those early times, deeply rooted in most countries and religions, that the actions of men were not only foreknown, but predestinated by a superior being. This sentiment is very frequent in the most ancient writers both sacred and profane, and seems a distinguishing character of the writings of the greatest antiquity. *The word of the Lord was fulfill'd*, is the prin-



## 12 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

Sends forth his active mind from place to place,  
Joins hill to dale, and measures space with space :

cipal observation in the history of the Old Testament ; and Διὸς δὲ πεπλάσθαι βούλη is the declared and obvious moral of the Iliad. If this great moral be fit to be represented in poetry, what means so proper to make it evident, as this introducing Jupiter foretelling the events which he had decreed ?

v. 86. *As some way-faring man, &c.]* The discourse of Jupiter to Juno being ended, she ascends to heaven with wonderful celerity, which the poet explains by this comparison. On other occasions he has illustrated the action of the mind by sensible images from the motion of bodies ; here he inverts the case, and shews the great velocity of Juno's flight by comparing it to the quickness of thought. No other comparison could have equalled the speed of an heavenly being. To render this more beautiful and exact, the poet describes a traveller who revolves in his mind the several places which he has seen, and in an instant passes in imagination from one distant part of the earth to another. Milton seems to have had it his eye in that elevated passage :

The speed of Gods  
Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.

As the sense in which we have explained this passage is exactly literal, as well as truly sublime, one cannot but wonder what should induce both Hobbes and Chapman to ramble so wide from it in their translations :

This said, went Juno to Olympus high,  
As when a man looks o'er an ample plain,  
To any distance quickly goes his eye :  
So swiftly Juno went with little pain.

Chapman's is yet more foreign to the subject :



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 13

Swift flew Juno to the blest abodes, 90  
If thought of man can match the speed of Gods.  
They sat the Pow'rs in awful synod plac'd ;  
They bow'd, and made obeisance as she pass'd,  
Thr' all the brazen dome : with goblets crown'd  
They hail her queen ; the nectar streams around.  
Fair Themis first presents the golden bowl, 96  
And anxious asks what cares disturb her soul ?

To whom the white-arm'd Goddess thus replies.  
Enough thou know'st the Tyrant of the skies,  
Severely bent his purpose to fulfil, 100  
Unmov'd his mind, and unrestrain'd his will.  
Go thou, the feasts of heav'n attend thy call ;  
Bid the crown'd nectar circle round the hall ;  
But Jove shall thunder thro' the ethereal dome,  
Such stern decrees, such threaten'd woes to come, 105  
As soon shall freeze mankind with dire surprise,  
And damp th' eternal banquets of the skies.

The Goddess said, and sullen took her place ;  
Blank horrour sadden'd each celestial face.  
To see the gath'ring grudge in ev'ry breast, 110  
Smiles on her lips a spleenful joy exprest ;

But as the mind of such a man, that hath a great way gone,  
And either knowing not his way, or then would let alone  
His purpos'd journey ; is distract, and in his vexed mind  
Resolves now not to go, now goes, still many way inclin'd—

v. 102. *Go thou, the feasts of heav'n attend thy call.]* This is a passage worthy our observation. Homer feigns, that Themis, that is Justice, presides over the feasts of the Gods ; to let us know, that she ought much more to preside over the feasts of men. *Eustathius.*



## 14 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV

While on her wrinkled front, and eye-brow bent,  
Sat steadfast care, and low'ring discontent.  
Thus she proceeds—Attend, ye Pow'rs above  
But know, 'tis madness to contest with Jove: 115  
Supreme he sits; and sees, in pride of sway,  
Your vassal Godheads grudgingly obey:  
Fierce in the majesty of pow'r, controuls;  
Shakes all the thrones of heav'n, and bends the  
poles.

Submiss, Immortals! all he wills, obey; 120  
And thou, great Mars, begin and shew the way.  
Behold Aescalaphus! behold him die,  
But dare not murmur, dare not vent a sigh;  
Thy own lov'd boasted offspring lies o'erthrown,  
If that lov'd boasted offspring be thy own. 125

v. 114. *Juno's speech to the Gods.*] It was no sort of exaggeration what the ancients have affirmed of Homer, that the examples of all kinds of oratory are to be found in his works. The present speech of Juno is a masterpiece in that sort, which seems to say one thing, and persuades another: for while she is only declaring to the Gods the orders of Jupiter, at the time that she tells them they must obey, she fills them with a reluctance to do it. By representing so strongly the superiority of his power, she makes them uneasy at it; and by particularly advising that God to submit, whose temper could least brook it, she incites him to downright rebellion. Nothing can be more fly and artfully provoking, than that stroke on the death of his darling son. *Do thou, O Mars, teach obedience to us all, for it is upon thee that Jupiter has put the severest trial: Aescalaphus thy son lies slain by his means: bear it with so much temper and moderation, that the world may not think he was thy son.*



## Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 15

Stern Mars, with anguish for his slaughter'd son,  
Smote his rebelling breast, and fierce begun.  
Thus, then, Immortals ! thus shall Mars obey ;  
Forgive me, Gods, and yield my vengeance way :  
Descending first to yon' forbidden plain, 130  
The God of battles dares avenge the slain ;  
Dares, tho' the thunder bursting o'er my head  
Should hurl me blazing on those heaps of dead.

With that, he gives command to Fear and Flight  
To join his rapid coursers for the fight : 135  
Then grim in arms, with hasty vengeance flies ;  
Arms, that reflect a radiance thro' the skies.  
And now had Jove, by bold rebellion driv'n,  
Discharg'd his wrath on half the host of heav'n ;  
But Pallas springing thro' the bright abode, 140  
Starts from her azure throne to calm the God.  
Struck for th' immortal race with timely fear,  
From frantick Mars she snatch'd the shield and  
spear ;  
Then the huge helmet lifting from his head,  
Thus, to th' impetuous homicide she said. 145

v. 134. *To Fear and Flight—*] Homer does not say, that Mars commanded they should join his horses to his chariot, which horses were called Fear and Flight. Fear and Flight are not the names of the horses of Mars, but the names of two Furies in the service of this God : it appears likewise by other passages, that they were his children, book xiii. v. 299. of the original. This is a very ancient mistake ; Eustathius mentions it as an error of Antimachus, yet Hobbes and most others have fallen into it.



## 16 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XV.

By what wild passion, furious ! art thou tost ?  
Striv'st thou with Jove ? thou art already lost.  
Shall not the Thund'rer's dread command re<sup>q</sup> train,  
And was imperial Juno heard in vain ?  
Back to the skies would'st thou with shar'ie be  
driv'n,

150

And in thy guilt involve the host of heav'n ?  
Ilion and Greece no more should Jove engage ;  
The skies would yield an ampler scene of rage,  
Guilty and guiltless find an equal fate,  
And one vast ruin whelm th' Olympian state. 155  
Cease then thy offspring's death unjust to call ;  
Heroes as great have dy'd, and yet shall fall.  
Why should heav'n's law with foolish man comply,  
Exempted from the race ordain'd to die ?

This menace fix'd the warriour to his throne ; 160  
Sullen he sat, and curb'd the rising groan.  
Then Juno call'd (Jove's orders to obey)  
The winged Iris, and the God of Day.  
Go wait the Thund'rer's will (Saturnia cry'd)  
On yon' tall summit of the fount-full Ide : 165

v. 164. *Go wait the Thund'rer's will.*] It is remarkable, that whereas it is familiar with the poet to repeat his errands and messages, here he introduces Juno with very few words, where she carries a dispatch from Jupiter to Iris and Apollo. She only says, " Jove commands you to attend him on mount Ida," and adds nothing of what had passed between herself and her consort before. The reason of this brevity is not only that she is highly disgusted with Jupiter, and so unwilling to tell her tale from the anguish of her heart ; but also be-



## Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 17

There in the Father's awful presence stand,  
Receive, and execute his dread command.

She said, and sat : the God that gilds the day,  
And various Iris, wing their airy way.  
Swift as the wind, to Ida's hills they came, 170  
(Fair nurse of fountains, and of savage game)  
There sat th' Eternal ; he, whose nod controlls  
The trembling world, and shakes the steady poles.  
Veil'd in a mist of fragrance him they found,  
With clouds of gold and purple circl'd round. 175  
Well-pleas'd the Thund'rer saw their earnest care,  
And prompt obedience to the queen of Air ;  
Then (while a smile serenes his awful brow)  
Commands the Goddess of the show'ry bow.

Iris ! descend, and what we here ordain 180  
Report to yon' mad Tyrant of the main.  
Bid him from fight to his own deeps repair,  
Or breathe from slaughter in the fields of air.  
If he refuse, then let him timely weigh  
Our elder birthright, and superiour sway. 185

cause Jupiter had given her no commission to relate fully the subject of their discourse : wherefore she is cautious of declaring what possibly he would have concealed. Neither does Jupiter himself in what follows reveal his decrees : for he lets Apollo only so far into his will, that he would have him disorder and rout the Greeks : their good fortune, and the success which was to ensue, he hides from him, as one who favoured the cause of Troy. One may remark in this passage Homer's various conduct and discretion concerning what ought to be put in practice, or left undone : whereby his reader may be informed how to regulate his own affairs. *Eustathius.*



18 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XV.

How shall his rashness stand the dire alarms,  
If heav'ns omnipotence descend in arms?  
Strives he with me, by whom his pow'r was giv'n,  
And is there equal to the Lord of Heav'n?

Th' Almighty spoke ; the Goddess wing'd her flight 190

To sacred Ilion from th' Idæan height.  
Swift as the rat'ling hail, or fleecy snows  
Drive thro' the skies, when Boreas fiercely blows ;  
So from the clouds descending Iris falls ;  
And to blue Neptune thus the Goddess calls. 195

Attend the mandate of the Sire above,  
In me behold the messenger of Jove :  
He bids thee from forbidden wars repair  
To thy own deeps, or to the fields of air.  
This if refus'd, he bids thee timely weigh 200  
His elder birth-right, and superiour sway.  
How shall thy rashness stand the dire alarms,  
If heav'ns omnipotence descend in arms ?  
Striv'st thou with him, by whom all pow'r is giv'n ?  
And art thou equal to the Lord of Heav'n ? 205

What means the haughty Sov'reign of the skies,  
(The King of Ocean thus, incens'd, replies)  
Rule as he will his portion'd realms on high ;  
No vassal God, nor of his train am I.  
Three brother deities from Saturn came, 210  
And ancient Rhea, earth's immortal dame :

v. 210. *Three brother Deities from Saturn came,  
And ancient Rhea, earth's immortal dame ;  
Assign'd by lot, our triple rule we know. &c.]*



## Book XV. HOMER'S ILIAD 19

Assign'd by lot, our triple rule we know ;  
Infernal Pluto sways the shades below ;  
O'er the wide clouds, and o'er the starry plain,  
Ethereal Jove extends his high domain ; 215

Some have thought the Platonick philosophers drew from hence the notion of their Triad (which the Christian Platonists since imagined to be an obscure hint of the Sacred Trinity.) The Trias of Plato is well known, τὰ ἀντὸν, οὐ νῦς ὁ δημιουργός, ἡ τε κόσμος τυχὴ. In his Georgias he tells us, τὸν "Ομηρον (autorem sc. suisse) τῆς τῶν δημιουργίκων Τριάδικῆς ὑποσάσσιας. See Proclus in Plat. Theol. lib. i. cap. 5. Lucian Philopatris. Aristotle de Cælo, lib. i. cap. 1. speaking of the Ternarian number from Pythagoras, has these words ; Τὰ τριά τριά, γέ τὸ τριῶν τριῶν. Καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀριτείας τῶν θεῶν χρεόμεθα τῷ αριθμῷ τύτῳ. Καθάπερ γὰρ φασὶν καὶ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι, τὸ τρίνον τὰ τριά τοῖς τρισὶν ἀριστεῖ. Τελευτὴ γὰρ καὶ μέσον καὶ ἀριθμὸν ἕχει τὸ τριῶν τριῶν τριῶν δὲ τὸν τριάδος. From which passage Trapezuntius endeavoured very seriously to prove, that Aristotle had a perfect knowledge of the Trinity. Duport (who furnished me with this note, and who seems to be sensible of the folly of Trapezuntius) nevertheless in his Gnomologia Homericæ, or comparison of our author's sentences with those of the Scripture, has placed, opposite to this verse, that of St. John : *There are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* I think this the strongest instance I ever met with of the manner of thinking of such men, whose too much learning has made them mad.

Lactantius, de Fals. Relig. lib. i. cap. 11. takes this fable to be a remain of ancient history, importing, that the empire of the then known world was divided among the three brothers ; to Jupiter the oriental part which was called Heaven, as the region of light, or the sun ; to Pluto the occidental, or darker regions : and to Neptune the sovereignty of the seas.



## 20 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

My court beneath the hoary waves I keep,  
And hush the roarings of the sacred deep :  
Olympus, and this earth, in common lie ;  
What claim has here the Tyrant of the sky ?  
Far in the distant clouds let him controll, 220  
And awe the younger brothers of the pole ;  
There to his children his commands be giv'n,  
The trembling, servile, second race of heav'n.

And must I then (said she) O Sire of Floods !  
Bear this fierce answer to the King of Gods ? 225  
Correct it yet, and change thy rash intent ;  
A noble mind disdains not to repent.  
To elder brothers guardian fiends are giv'n,  
To scourge the wretch insulting them and heav'n.

Great is the profit (thus the God rejoin'd) 230  
When ministers are blest with prudent mind :  
Warn'd by thy words, to pow'rful Jove I yield,  
And quit, tho' angry, the contended field.

v. 228. *To elder brothers.*] Iris, that she may not seem to upbraid Neptune with weakness of judgment, out of regard to the greatness and dignity of his person, does not say that Jupiter is stronger or braver ; but attacking him from a motive not in the least invidious, superiority of age, she says sententiously, that the Furies wait upon our elders. The Furies are said to wait upon men in a double sense : either for evil, as they did upon Orestes after he had slain his mother ; or else for their good, as upon elders when they are injured, to protect them and avenge their wrongs. This is an instance that the pagans looked upon birth-right as a right divine. *Eustathius.*



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 21

Not but his threats with justice I disclaim,  
The same our honours, and our birth the same.  
If yet, forgetful of his promise giv'n 236  
To Hermes, Pallas, and the Queen of heav'n ;  
To favour Ilion, that perfidious place,  
He breaks his faith with half th' ethereal race :  
Give him to know, unless the Grecian train 240  
Lay yon' proud structures level with the plain,  
Howe'er th' offence by other Gods be past,  
The wrath of Neptune shall for ever last.

Thus speaking, furious from the field he strode,  
And plung'd into the bosom of the flood. 245  
The Lord of Thunders from his lofty height  
Beheld, and thus bespoke the Source of light.

Behold ! the God whose liquid arms are hurl'd  
Around the globe, whose earthquakes rock the  
world ;  
Desists at length his rebel-war to wage, 250  
Seeks his own seas, and trembles at our rage ;  
Else had my wrath, heav'n's thrones all shaking round,  
Burn'd to the bottom of the seas profound ;

v. 252. *Else had my wrath, &c.]* This representation of the terrors which must have attended the conflict of two such mighty powers as Jupiter and Neptune, whereby the elements had been mixed in confusion, and the whole frame of nature endangered, is imaged in these few lines with a nobleness suitable to the occasion. Milton has a thought very like it in his fourth book, where he represents what must have happened if Satan and Gabriel had encountered :



22 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XV.

And all the Gods that round old Saturn dwell,  
Had heard the thunders to the deeps of hell. 255  
Well was the crime, and well the vengeance spar'd ;  
Ev'n pow'r immense had found such battle hard.  
Go thou, my son ! the trembling Greeks alarm,  
Shake my broad Ægis on thy active arm,  
Be god-like Hector thy peculiar care, 260  
Swell his bold heart, and urge his strength to war :  
Let Ilion conquer, 'till th' Achaian train  
Fly to their ships and Hellespont again :  
Then Greece shall breathe from toils—the God-  
head said :

His will divine the son of Jove obey'd. 265  
Not half so swift the failing falcon flies,  
That drives a turtle thro' the liquid skies ;  
As Phœbus shooting from th' Idæan brow,  
Glides down the mountain to the plain below.  
There Hector seated by the stream he sees, 270  
His sense returning with the coming breeze ;  
Again his pulses beat, his spirits rise ;  
Again his lov'd companions meet his eyes ;  
Jove thinking of his pains, they past away.  
To whom the God who gives the golden day. 275

— — — — Not only Paradise  
In this commotion, but the starry cope  
Of heav'n, perhaps, and all the elements  
At last had gone to wreck, disturb'd and torn  
With violence of this conflict; had not soon  
Th' Almighty, to prevent such horrid fray, &c.

v. 274. *Jove thinking of his pains, they past away.] Eu-*



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D. 23**

**Why sits great Hector from the field so far ?  
What grief, what wound, with-holds thee from  
the war ?**

The fainting hero, as the vision bright  
Stood shining o'er him, half unseal'd his sight :  
What blest Immortal, with commanding breath,  
Thus wakens Hector from the sleep of death ? 281  
Has Fame not told, how, while my trusty sword  
Bath'd Greece in slaughter, and her battle gor'd,  
The mighty Ajax with a deadly blow  
Had almost funk me to the shades below ? 285  
Ev'n yet, methinks, the gliding ghosts I spy,  
And hell's black horrors swim before my eye.

To him Apollo. Be no more dismay'd ;  
See, and be strong ! the Thund'rer sends thee aid.  
Behold ! thy Phœbus shall his arms employ, 290  
Phœbus, propitious still to thee, and Troy.  
Inspire thy warriours then with manly force,  
And to the ships impel thy rapid horse :  
Ev'n I will make thy fiery coursers way,  
And drive the Grecians headlong to the sea. 295

Thus to bold Hector spoke the son of Jove,  
And breath'd immortal ardour from above.

Stathius observes, that this is a very sublime representation of the power of Jupiter, to make Hector's pains cease from the moment wherein Jupiter first turned his thoughts towards him. Apollo finds him so far recovered, as to be able to sit up, and know his friends. Thus much was the work of Jupiter ; the God of health perfects the cure.



As when the pamper'd steed, with reins unbound,  
Breaks from his stall, and pours along the ground ;  
With ample strokes he rushes to the flood, 300  
To bathe his sides, and cool his fiery blood ;  
His head now freed, he tosses to the skies ;  
His mane dishevell'd o'er his shoulders flies :  
He snuffs the females in the well-known plain,  
And springs, exulting, to his fields again : 305  
Urg'd by the voice divine, thus Hector flew,  
Full of the God ; and all his hosts pursue.

v. 298. *As when the pamper'd steed*] This comparison is repeated from the sixth book, and we are told that the ancient criticks retained no more than the two first verses and the four last in this place, and that they gave the verses two marks ; by the one (which was the asterism) they intimated, that the four lines were very beautiful ; but by the other (which was the obelus) that they were ill placed. I believe an impartial reader who considers the two places will be of the same opinion.

Tasso has improved the justness of this simile in his sixteenth book, where Rinaldo returning from the arms of Armida to battle, is compared to the steed that is taken from his pastures and mares to the service of the war : the reverse of the circumstance better agreeing with the occasion.

“ Qual feroce destrier, ch' al faticoso  
“ Honor de l'arme viucitor sia tolto,  
“ E lascivo marito in vil riposo  
“ Fra gli armenti, e ne' paschi erri disciolto ;  
“ Se'l desta o suon di tromba, o luminoso  
“ Acciar, coltà tolto annitendo è volto ;  
“ Già già brama l'arringo, è l'huom sul dorso  
“ Portando, urtato riurtar nel corso.”



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 25

As when the force of men and dogs combin'd  
Invade the mountain goat, or branching hind ;  
Far from the hunter's rage secure they lie 310  
Close in the rock, (not fated yet to die)  
When lo ! a lion shoots across the way !  
They fly : at once the chasers and the prey.  
So Greece, that late in conqu'ring troops pursu'd,  
And mark'd their progress thro' the ranks in blood,  
Soon as they see the furious chief appear, 316  
Forget to vanquish, and consent to fear.

Thoas with grief observ'd his dreadful course,  
Thoas, the bravest of th' Aetolian force :  
Skill'd to direct the jav'lin's distant flight, 320  
And bold to combat in the standing fight ;  
Nor more in councils fam'd for solid sense,  
Than winning words and heav'nly eloquence.

v. 311. *Not fated yet to die.*] Dacier has a pretty remark on this passage, that Homer extended Destiny (that is, the care of Providence) even over the beasts of the field ; an opinion that agrees perfectly with true theology. In the book of Jonas, the regard of the Creator extending to the meanest rank of his creatures, is strongly expressed in those words of the Almighty, where he makes his compassion to the brute beasts one of the reasons against destroying Nineveh. *Shall I not spare the great city, in which there are more than six score thousand persons, and also much cattle ?* And what is still more parallel to this passage, in St. Matthew, ch. x. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? And yet one of them shall not fall to the ground, without your Father.*



## 26 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

Gods ! what portent (he cry'd) these eyes invades ?  
Lo ! Hector rises from the Stygian shades ! . . . . . 325  
We saw him, late, by thund'ring Ajax kill'd :  
What God restores him to the frighted field ;  
And not content that half of Greece lie slain,  
Pours new destruction on her sons again ?  
He comes not, Jove ! without thy pow'rful will ;  
Lo ! still he lives, pursues, and conquers still ! 331  
Yet hear my counsel, and his worst withstand,  
The Greeks main body to the fleet command ;  
But let the few whom brisker spirits warm,  
Stand the first onset, and provoke the storm. . . . . 335  
Thus point your arms ; and when such foes appear,  
Fierce as he is, let Hector learn to fear.

The warriour spoke, the list'ning Greeks obey,  
Thick'ning their ranks, and form a deep array.  
Each Ajax, Teucer, Merion gave command, 340  
The valiant leader of the Cretan band.  
And Mars-like Meges : these the chiefs excite,  
Approach the foc, and meet the coming fight.  
Behind, unnumber'd multitudes, attend,  
To flank the navy, and the shores defend. . . . . 345  
Full on the front the pressing Trojans bear,  
And Hector first came tow'ring to the war.  
Phœbus himself the rushing battle led ;  
A veil of clouds involv'd his radiant head :  
High-held before him, Jove's enormous shield 350  
Portentous shone, and shaded all the field ;  
Vulcan to Jove th' immortal gift consign'd,  
To scatter hosts, and terrify mankind.



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 27

The Greeks expect the shock, the clamours rise  
From diff'rent parts, and mingle in the skies. 355  
Dire was the hiss of darts, by heroes flung,  
And arrows leaping from the bow-string sung ;  
These drink the life of gen'rous warriours slain ;  
Those guiltless fall, and thirst for blood in vain.  
As long as Phœbus bore unmov'd the shield, 360  
Sat doubtful Conquest hov'ring o'er the field ;  
But when aloft he shakes it in the skies,  
Shouts in their ears, and lightens in their eyes,  
Deep horrour seizes ev'ry Grecian breast,  
Their force is humbled, and their fear confess. 365  
So flies a herd of oxen, scatter'd wide,  
No swain to guard 'em, and no day to guide,  
When two fell lions from the mountain come,  
And spread the carnage thro' the shady gloom.

v. 362. *But when aloft he shakes.]* Apollo, in this passage, by this mere shaking his *Ægis*, without acting offensively, annoys and put the Greeks into disorder. Eustathius thinks that such a motion might possibly create the same confusion, as hath been reported by historians to proceed from *panick fears*: or that it might intimate some dreadful confusion in the air, and a noise issuing from thence; a notion which seems to be warranted by Apollo's out-cry, which presently follows in the same verse. But perhaps we need not go so far to account for this fiction of Homer: the sight of a hero's armour often has the like effect in an epick poem: the shield of prince Arthur in Spenser works the same wonders with this *Ægis* of Apollo.



## 28 HOMER's ILIA D. Book XV.

**Impending Phœbus** pours around 'em fear, 370

**And Troy and Hector** thunder in the rear.

**Heaps fall on heaps :** the slaughter Hector leads ;

**First great Arcesilas,** then Stichius bleeds ;

**One to the bold Bœotians ever dear,**

**And one Menestheus' friend, and fam'd compeer.**

**Medon and Iäfus, Æneas sped ;** 376

**This sprung from Phelus, and th' Athenians led ;**

**But hapless Medon from Oileus came ;**

**Him Ajax honour'd with a brother's name,**

**'Tho' born of lawless love : from home expell'd,**

**A banish'd man, in Phylacè he dwell'd,** 381

**Prest'd by the vengeance of an angry wife ;**

**'Troy ends, at last, his labours and his life.**

**Mecystes next, Polydamas o'erthrew ;**

**And thee, brave Clonius, great Agenor slew.** 385

**By Paris, Deiochus inglorious dies,**

**Pierc'd thro' the shoulder as he basely flies.**

**Polites' arm laid Echius on the plain ;**

**Stretch'd on one heap, the victors spoil the slain.**

**The Greeks dismay'd, confus'd, disperse or fall,** 390

**Some seek the trench, some skulk behind the wall.**

v. 386. *By Paris, Deicchus inglorious dies,  
Pierc'd thro' the shoulder as he basely flies.]*

Here is one that falls under the spear of Paris, smitten in the extremity of his shoulder as he was flying. This gives occasion to a pretty observation in Eustathius, that this is the only Greek who falls by a wound in the back ; so careful is Homer of the honour of his countrymen. And this remark will appear not ill grounded, if we except the death of Eioneus in the beginning of lib. vi.



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 29

While these fly trembling, others pant for breath,  
And o'er the slaughter stalks gigantick Death.  
On rush'd bold Hector, gloomy as the night ;  
Forbids to plunder, animates the fight, 395  
Points to the fleet : for by the Gods, who flies,  
Who dares but linger, by this hand he dies ;  
No weeping sister his cold eye shall close,  
No friendly hand his fun'ral pyre compose.  
Who stops to plunder at this signal hour, 400  
The birds shall tear him, and the dogs devour.

v. 396. *For by the Gods, who flies, &c.]* It sometimes happens (says Longinus) that a writer in speaking of some person, all on a sudden puts himself in that other's place, and acts his part ; a figure which marks the impetuosity and hurry of passion. It is this which Homer practises in these verses ; the poet stops his narration forgets his own person, and instantly, without any notice, puts this precipitate menace into the mouth of his furious and transported hero. How must his discourse have languished, had he staid to tell us, *Hector then said these, or the like words ?* Instead of which, by this unexpected transition he prevents the reader, and the transition is made before the poet seems sensible he had made it. The true and proper place for this figure is when the time presses, and the occasion will not allow of any delay : it is elegant then to pass from one person to another, as in that of Hecataeus. *The herald, extremely discontented at the orders he had received, gave command to the Heraclidae to withdraw.—It is no way in my power to help you ; if therefore you would not perish early and if you would not involve me in your ruin, depart, and seek shelter among some other people.* Longinus chap. XXIII.



30

## HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

Furious he said ; the smarting scourge resounds ;  
The coursers fly ; the smoking chariot bounds :  
The hosts rush on ; loud clamours shake the shore ;  
The horses thunder, Earth and Ocean roar ! 405  
Apollo, planted at the trench's bound,  
Push'd at the bank : down sunk th' enormous  
mound :

Roll'd in the ditch the heapy ruin lay ;  
A sudden road ! a long and ample way.  
O'er the dread fosse (a late-impervious space) 410  
Now steeds, and men, and cars, tumultuous pass.  
The wond'ring crowds the downward level trod ;  
Before them flam'd the shield, and march'd the God.  
Then with his hand he shook the mighty wall ;  
And lo ! the turrets nod, the bulwarks fall. 415  
Easy, as when ashore an infant stands,  
And draws imagin'd houses in the sands ;  
The sportive wanton, pleas'd with somē new play,  
Sweeps the slight works and fashion'd domes away.  
Thus vanish'd, at thy touch, the tow'rs and walls ;  
The toil of thousands in a moment falls. 421

v. 416. *As when ashore an infant stands.*] This simile of the sand is inimitable ; it is not easy to imagine any thing more exact and emphatical to describe the tumbling and confused heap of a wall, in a moment. Moreover, the comparison here, taken from sand, is the juster, as it rises from the very place and scene before us. For the wall here demolished, as it was founded on the ~~coast~~, must needs border on the sand ; wherefore the similitude is borrowed immediately from the subject-matter under view. *Eustathius.*



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 31

The Grecians gaze around with wild despair,  
Confus'd, and weary all the Pow'rs with pray'r ;  
Exhort their men with praises, threats, commands ;  
And urge the Gods, with voices, eyes, and hands.  
Experienc'd Nestor chief obtests the skies, 426  
And weeps his country with a father's eyes.

O Jove ! if ever, on his native shore,  
One Greek enrich'd thy shrine with offer'd gore ;  
If e'er, in hope our country to behold, 430  
We paid the fattest firstlings of the fold ;  
If e'er thou sign'st our wishes with thy nod ;  
Perform the promise of a gracious God !  
This day, preserve our navies from the flame,  
And save the reliques of the Grecian name. 435

Thus pray'd the sage : th' Eternal gave consent,  
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.  
Presumptuous Troy mistook th' accepting sign,  
And catch'd new fury at the voice divine.

v. 428. *O Jove ! if ever, &c.]* The form of Nestor's prayer in this place resembles that of Chryses in the first book. And it is worth remarking, that the poet well knew, what shame and confusion the reminding one of past benefits is apt to produce. From the same topick Achilles talks with his mother, and Thetis herself accosts Jove ; and likewise Phœnix, where he holds a parley with Achilles. This righteous prayer hath its wished accomplishment. *Eustathius.*

y 428. *Presumptuous Troy mistook the sign.]* The thunder of Jupiter is designed as a mark of his acceptance of Nestor's prayers, and a sign of his favour to the Greeks.



As, when black tempests mix the seas and skies,  
The roaring deeps in wat'ry mountains rise, 441  
Above the sides of some tall ship ascend,  
Its womb they deluge, and its ribs they rend :  
Thus loudly roaring, and o'er-pow'ring all,  
Mount the thick Trojans up the Grecian wall ; 445  
Legions on legions from each side arise :  
Thick sound the keels ; the storm of arrows flies.  
Fierce on the ships above, the cars below,  
These wield the mace, and those the jav'lin throw.

While thus the thunder of the battle rag'd, 450  
And lab'ring armies round the works engag'd ;

However, there being nothing in the prodigy particular to the Greeks, the Trojans expound it in their own favour, as they seem warranted by their present success. This self-partiality of men in appropriating to themselves the protection of Heaven, has always been natural to them. In the same manner Virgil makes Turnus explain the transformation of the Trojan ships into nymphs, as an ill omen to the Trojans.

"Trojanos hæc monstra petunt, his Jupiter ipse  
"Auxilium solitum eripuit."—

History furnishes many instances of oracles, which, by reason of this partial interpretation, have proved an occasion to lead men into great misfortunes : it was the case of Croesus in his wars with Cyrus ; and a like mistake engaged Pyrrhus to make war upon the Romans.

v. 448. *On the ships above, the cars below.]* This is a new sort of battle, which Homer has never before mentioned ; the Greeks on their ships, and the Trojans in their chariots, as on a plain. *Eustathius.*



## Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD.

Still in the tent Patroclus sat, to tend  
The good Eurypylus, his wounded friend.  
He sprinkles healing balms, to anguish kind,  
And adds discourse, the med'cine of the mind. 455  
But when he saw, ascending up the fleet,  
Victorious Troy ; then, starting from his seat,  
With bitter groans his sorrows he prest,  
He wrings his hands, he beats his manly breast.  
Tho' yet thy state requires redress (he cries) 460  
Depart I must : what horrors strike my eyes ?  
Charg'd with Achilles' high commands I go,  
A mournful witness of this scene of woe :  
I haste to urge him, by his country's care,  
To rise in arms, and shine again in war. 465  
Perhaps some fav'ring God his soul may bend ;  
The voice is pow'rful of a faithful friend.

He spoke ; and speaking, swifter than the wind  
Sprung from the tent, and left the war behind.  
Th' embody'd Greeks the fierce attack sustain, 470  
But strive, tho' numerous, to repulse in vain !  
Nor could the Trojans, thro' that firm array,  
Force to the fleet and tents th' impervious way.

v. 472. *Nor could the Trojans—Force to the fleet and tents th' impervious way.*] Homer always marks distinctly the place of battle ; he here shews us clearly, that the Trojans attacked the first line of the fleet that stood next the wall, or the vessels which were drawn foremost on the land these vessels were a strong rampart to the tents which were pitched behind, and to the other line of the



## HOMER'S ILIA D. Book XV

As when a shipwright, with Palladian art, 474  
Smooths the rough wood, and levels ev'ry part ;  
With equal hand he guides his whole design,  
By the just rule, and the directing line :  
The martial leaders, with like skill and care,  
Preserv'd their line, and equal kept the war. 479  
Brave deeds of arms thro' all the ranks were try'd,  
And ev'ry ship sustain'd an equal tide.

At one proud bark, high-tow'ring o'er the fleet  
Ajax the great, and god-like Hector meet ;  
For one bright prize the matchless chiefs contend ;  
Nor this the ships can fire, nor that defend ; 485  
One kept the shore, and one the vessel trod ;  
That fix'd as Fate, this acted by a God.  
The son of Clytius in his daring hand,  
The deck approaching, shakes a flaming brand ;  
But pierc'd by Telamon's huge lance expires ; 490  
Thund'ring he falls, and drops th' extinguish'd fires.  
Great Hector view'd him with a sad survey,  
As stretch'd in dust before the stern he lay.  
Oh ! all of Trojan, all of Lycian race !  
Stand to your arms, maintain this arduous space :  
Lo ! where the son of royal Clytius lies ; 496  
Ah save his arms, secure his obsequies !

This said, his eager jav'lin sought the foé :  
But Ajax shunn'd the meditated blow.

navy which stood nearer to the sea ; to penetrate  
fore to the tents, they must necessarily force the first line,  
and defeat the troops which defended it. *Eupathius.*



**Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 35**

Not vainly yet the forceful lance was thrown ;  
It stretch'd in dust unhappy Lycophron : 501  
. An exile long, sustain'd at Ajax' board,  
A faithful servant to a foreign lord ;  
In peace, in war, for ever at his side,  
Near his lov'd master, as he liv'd, he dy'd. 505  
From the high poop he tumbles on the sand,  
And lies a lifeless load, along the land.  
With anguish Ajax views the piercing fight,  
And thus inflames his brother to the fight.

Teucer, behold ! extended on the shore 510  
Our friend, our lov'd companion ! now no more !  
Dear as a parent, with a parent's care  
To fight our wars, he left his native air.  
This death deplored, to Hector's rage we owe ;  
Revenge, revenge it on the cruel foe. 515  
Where are those darts on which the Fates attend ? .  
And where the bow, which Phœbus taught to bend ?

Impatient Teucer, hast'ning to his aid,  
Before the chief his ample bow display'd ;  
The well-stor'd quiver on his shoulders hung : 520  
Then hiss'd his arrow, and the bow-string fung.  
Clytus, Pisenor's son, renown'd in fame,  
(To thee, Polydamas ! an honour'd name)  
Drove thro' the thickest of th' embattl'd plains  
The startling steeds, and shook his eager reins. 525  
As all on glory ran his ardent mind,  
The pointed death arrests him from behind:



36 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XV.

Thro' his fair neck the thrilling arrow flies ;  
In youth's first bloom reluctantly he dies.  
Hurl'd from the lofty seat, at distance far, 530  
The headlong coursers spurn his empty car ;  
'Till sad Polydamas the steeds restrain'd,  
And gave, Astynous, to thy careful hand ;  
Then, fir'd to vengeance, rush'd amidst the foe,  
Rage edg'd his sword, and strengthen'd ev'ry blow.

Once more bold Teucer, in his country's cause,  
At Hector's breast a chosen arrow draws ; 537  
And had the weapon found the destin'd way,  
Thy fall, great Trojan ! had renown'd that day.  
But Hector was not doom'd to perish then :  
Th' all-wise Disposer of the fates of men, 541  
(Imperial Jove) his present death withstands ;  
Nor was such glory due to Teucer's hands.

At its full stretch as the tough string he drew,  
Struck by an arm unseen, it burst in two ; 545  
Down dropp'd the bow : the shaft with brazen head  
Fell innocent, and on the dust lay dead.  
The astonish'd archer to great Ajax cries ;  
Some God prevents our destin'd enterprise :  
Some God, propitious to the Trojan foe, 550  
Has, from my arm unfailing, struck the bow,  
And broke the nerve my hands had twin'd with art,  
Strong to impel the flight of many a dart.

Since Heav'n commands it (Ajax made reply)  
Dismiss the bow, and lay thy arrows by ; 555  
(Thy arms no less suffice the lance to wield)  
And quit the quiver for the rond'rous shield.



**Book XV. HOMER's ILIA D. 37**

**In the first ranks indulge thy thirst of fame,  
Thy brave example shall the rest inflame.  
Fierce as they are, by long successes vain ; 560  
To force our fleet, or ev'n a ship to gain,  
Asks toil, and sweat, and blood : their utmost might  
Shall find its match—no more : 'tis ours to fight.**

**Then Teucer laid his faithless bow aside ;  
The four-fold buckler o'er his shoulder ty'd ; 565  
On his brave head a crested helm he plac'd,  
With nodding horse-hair formidably grac'd ;  
A dart, whose point with brass resplendent shines,  
The warriour wields ; and his great brother joins.**

**This Hector saw, and thus express'd his joy, 570  
Ye troops of Lycia, Dardanus, and Troy !  
Be mindful of yourselves, your ancient fame,  
And spread your glory with the navy's flame.  
Jove is with us ; I saw his hand, but now,  
From the proud archer strike his vaunted bow. 575  
Indulgent Jove ! how plain thy favours shine,  
When happy nations bear the marks divine !  
How easy then, to see the sinking state  
Of realms accurst, deserted, reprobate !  
Such is the fate of Greece, and such is ours : 580  
Behold, ye warriours, and exert your pow'rs.  
Death is the worst ; a fate which all must try ;  
And for our country, 'tis a bliss to die.**

**v. 582. Death is the worst, &c.] It is with very great address, that to the bitterness of death, he adds the advantages that were to accrue after it. And the ancients are of opinion, that it would be as advantageous for**



## 38 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

The gallant man, tho' slain in fight he be,  
Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free ; 585  
Entails a debt on all the grateful state ;  
His own brave friends shall glory in his fate ;  
His wife live honour'd, all his race succeed ;  
And late posterity enjoy the deed !

This rous'd the soul in ev'ry Trojan breast : 590  
The god-like Ajax next his Greeks addrest.

young soldiers to read this lesson, concise as it is, as all the volumes of Tyrtæus, wherein he endeavours to raise the spirits of his countrymen. Homer makes a noble enumeration of the parts wherein the happiness of a city consists. For having told us in another place, the three great evils to which a town, when taken, is subject ; the slaughter of the men, the destruction of the place by fire, the leading of their wives and children into captivity ; now he reckons up the blessings that are contrary to those calamities. To the slaughter of the men indeed he makes no opposition ; because it is not necessary to the well-being of a city, that every individual should be saved, and not a man slain. *Eustathius.*

v. 591. *The God-like Ajax next.]* The oration of Hector is more splendid and shining than that of Ajax, and also more solemn, from his sentiments concerning the favour and assistance of Jupiter. But that of Ajax is more politick, fuller of management, and apter to persuade ; for it abounds with no less than seven generous arguments to inspire resolution. He exhorts his people even to death, from the danger to which their navy was exposed, which, if once consumed, they were never like to get home. And as the Trojans were bid to die, so he bids his men dare to die likewise ; and indeed with great necessity, for the Trojans may recruit after the engage-



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 39

How long, ye warriours of the Argive race,  
(To gen'rous Argos what a dire disgrace !)  
How long, on these curs'd confines will ye lie,  
Yet undetermin'd, or to live, or die ! 595  
What hopes remain, what methods to retire,  
If once your vessels catch the Trojan fire ?  
Mark how the flames approach, how near they fall,  
How Hector calls, and Troy obeys his call !  
Not to the dance that dreadful voice invites, 600  
It calls to death, and all the rage of fights.  
'Tis now no time for wisdom or debates ;  
To your own hands are trusted all your fates ;  
And better far in one decisive strife,  
One day should end our labour, or our life ; 605  
Than keep this hard-got inch of barren sands,  
Still press'd, and press'd by such inglorious hands.

The list'ning Grecians feel their leader's flame,  
And ev'ry kindling bosom pants for fame.  
Then mutual slaughters spread on either side ; 610  
By Hector here the Phocian Schedius dy'd ;  
There pierc'd by Ajax, sunk Laodamas,  
Chief of the foot, of old Antenor's race.  
Polydamas laid Otus on the sand,  
The fierce commander of th' Epeian band. 615  
His lance bold Meges at the victor threw ;  
The victor stooping, from the death withdrew ;

ment, but for the Greeks, they had no better way than to hazard their lives ; and if they should gain nothing else by it, yet at least they would have a speedy dispatch, not a lingering and dilatory destruction. *Eustathius.*



(That valu'd life, O Phœbus ! was thy care)  
But Crœsmus' bosom took the flying spear :  
His corpse fell bleeding on the slipp'ry shore ; 620  
His radiant arms triumphant Meges bore.  
Dolops, the son of Lampus rushes on,  
Sprung from the race of old Laomedon,  
And fam'd for prowess in a well-fought field ;  
He pierc'd the center of his sounding shield : 625  
But Meges, Phyleus' ample breast-plate wore,  
(Well-known in fight on Selles' winding shore ;  
For king Euphetes gave the golden mail,  
Compact, and firm with many a jointed scale)  
Which oft, in cities storm'd, and battles won, 630  
Had sav'd the father, and now saves the son.  
Full at the Trojan's head he urg'd his lance,  
Where the high plumes above the helmet dance,  
New ting'd with Tyrian dye : in dust below,  
Shorn from the crest, the purple honours glow. 635  
Meantime their fight the Spartan king survey'd,  
And stood by Meges' side, a sudden aid,  
Thro' Dolops' shoulder urg'd his forceful dart,  
Which held its passage thro' the panting heart.  
And issu'd at his breast. With thund'ring sound  
The warriour falls, extended on the ground. 641  
In rush the conqu'ring Greeks to spoil the slain :  
But HeCTOR's voice excites his kindred train ;  
The hero most, from Hicetaon sprung,  
Fierce Melanippus, gallant, brave, and young. 645  
He (e'er to Troy the Grecians cross'd the main)  
Fed his large oxen on Percote's plain ;



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 41

**But when oppress'd, his country claim'd his care,**  
**Return'd to Ilion, and excell'd in war ;**  
**For this, in Priam's court, he held his place,** 950  
**Belov'd no less than Priam's royal race.**  
**Him Hector singled, as his troops he led,**  
**And thus inflamed him, pointing to the dead.**

**Lo Melanippus ! lo where Dolops lies ;**  
**And is it thus our royal kinsman dies ?** 655  
**O'ermatch'd he falls ; to two at once a prey,**  
**And lo ! they bear the bloody arms away !**  
**Come on—a distant war no longer wage,**  
**But hand to hand thy country's foes engage :**  
**"Till Greece at once, and all her glory end ;** 660  
**Or Ilion from her tow'ry height descend,**  
**Heav'd from the lowest stone ; and bury all**  
**In one sad sepulchre, one common fall.**

**Hector (this said) rush'd forward on the foes :**  
**With equal ardour Melanippus glows :** 665  
**Then Ajax thus—Oh Greeks ! respect your fame,**  
**Respect yourselves, and learn an honest shame :**  
**Let mutual rev'rence mutual warmth inspire,**  
**And catch from breast to breast the noble fire.**  
**On valour's side the odds of combat lie,** 670  
**The brave live glorious, or lamented die ;**  
**The wretch that trembles in the field of fame,**  
**Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.**

**His gen'rous sense he not in vain imparts ;**  
**It sunk, and rooted in the Grecian hearts,** 675



## 42 HOMER'S ILIA D. Book XV.

They join, they throng, they thicken at his call,  
And flank the navy with a brazen wall ;  
Shields touching shields, in order blaze above,  
And stop the Trojans, tho' impell'd by Jove.  
The fiery Spartan first, with loud applause, 680  
Warms the bold son of Nestor in his cause.  
Is there (he said) in arms a youth like you,  
So strong to fight, so active to pursue ?  
Why stand you distant, nor attempt a deed ?  
Lift the bold lance, and make some Trojan bleed.

He said ; and backward to the lines retir'd ; 686  
Forth rush'd the youth, with martial fury fir'd,  
Beyond the foremost ranks ; his lance he threw,  
And round the black battalions cast his view.  
The troops of Troy recede with sudden fear, 690  
While the swift jav'lin hiss'd along in air.  
Advancing Melanippus met the dart  
With his bold breast, and felt it in his heart :  
Thund'ring he falls ; his falling arms resound,  
And his broad buckler rings against the ground.  
The victor leaps upon his prostrate prize ; 696  
Thus on a roe the well-breath'd beagle flies,

v. 677. *And flank the navy with a brazen wall.]* The poet has built the Grecians a new sort of wall out of their arms ; and perhaps one might say, it was from this passage Apollo borrowed that oracle which he gave to the Athenians about their wall of wood ; in like manner the Spartans were said to have a wall of bones : if so, we must allow the God not a little obliged to the poet. *Eustathius.*



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 43

And rends his side, fresh-bleeding with the dart  
The distant hunter sent into his heart.

Observing Hector to the rescue flew ; 700  
Bold as he was, Antilochus withdrew.

So when a savage, ranging o'er the plain,  
Has torn the shepherd's dog, or shepherd swain ;  
While conscious of the deed, he glares around,  
And hears the gath'ring multitude resound, 705

Timely he flies the yet-untasted food,  
And gains the friendly shelter of the wood.  
So fears the youth ; all Troy with shouts pursue,  
While stones and darts in mingled tempest flew ;  
But enter'd in the Grecian ranks, he turns 710  
His manly breast, and with new fury burns.

Now on the fleet the tides of Trojans drove,  
Fierce to fulfill the stern decrees of Jove :  
The Sire of Gods, confirming Thetis' pray'r,  
The Grecian ardour quench'd in deep despair ; 714  
But lifts to glory Troy's prevailing bands,  
Swells all their hearts, and strengthens all their hands.  
On Ida's top he waits with longing eyes,  
To view the navy blazing to the skies ;  
Then, nor 'till then, the scale of war shall turn,  
The Trojans fly, and conquer'd Ilion burn. 721  
These fates revolv'd in his almighty mind,  
Raises Hector to the work design'd,

v. 723. *He raises Hector, &c.]* This picture of Hector, impelled by Jupiter, is a very finished piece, and excels all the drawings of this hero which Homer has given us in so various attitudes. He is here represented as an in-



## 44 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XV.

Bids him with more than mortal fury glow,  
And drives him, like a light'ning, on the foe. 725  
So Mars, when human crimes for vengeance call,  
Shakes his huge jav'lin, and whole armies fall.  
Not with more rage a conflagration rolls,  
Wraps the vast mountains, and involves the poles.  
He foams with wrath ; beneath his gloomy brow  
Like fiery meteors his red eye-balls glow : 731  
The radiant helmet on his temples burns,  
Waves when he nods, and lightens as he turns :  
For Jove his splendour round the chief had thrown,  
And cast the blaze of both the hosts on one. 735  
Unhappy glories ! for his fate was near,  
Due to stern Pallas, and Pelides' spear :

strument in the hand of Jupiter, to bring about those designs the God had long projected : and as his fatal hour now approaches, Jove is willing to recompense his hasty death with this short-lived glory. Accordingly, this being the last scene of victory he is to appear in, the poet introduces him with all imaginable pomp, and adorns him with all the terror of a conqueror : his eyes sparkle with fire, his mouth foams with fury, his figure is compared to the God of War, his rage is equalled to a conflagration and a storm, and the destruction he causes is resembled to that which a lion makes among the herds. The poet, by this heap of comparisons, raises the idea of the hero higher than any simple description could reach.

v. 736. — *His fate was near — Due to stern Pallas.*] It may be asked, what Pallas has to do with the Fates? or what power has she over them? Homer speaks thus because Minerva has already resolved to succour Achilles



Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 45

Yet Jove deferr'd the death he was to pay,  
And gave what Fate allow'd, the honours of a day !  
Now all on fire for fame, his breast, his eyes  
Burn at each foe, and single ev'ry prize ; 741  
Still at the closest ranks, the thickest fight,  
He points his ardour, and exerts his might.  
The Grecian phalanx moveless as a tow'r  
On all sides batter'd, yet resists his pow'r : 745  
So some tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,  
By winds assail'd, by billows beat in vain,  
Unmov'd it hears, above, the tempest blow,  
And sees the wat'ry mountains break below.  
Girt in surrounding flames, he seems to fall, 750  
Like fire from Jove, and bursts upon them all :  
Bursts as a wave that from the clouds impends,  
And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends ;

and deceive Hector in the combat between these two heroes, as we find in book xxii. Properly speaking, Pallas is nothing but the knowledge and wisdom of Jove, and it is wisdom which presides over the counsels of his providence ; therefore she may be looked upon as drawing all things to the fatal term to which they are decreed.

*Dacier.*

v. 752. *Bursts as a wave, &c.]* Longinus, observing that oftentimes the principal beauty of writing consists in the judicious assembling together of the great circumstances, and the strength with which they are marked in the proper place, chooses this passage of Homer as a plain instance of it. "Where (says that noble critick) in describing the terrore of a tempest, he takes care to express whatever are the accidents of most dread and horrour in such a situation : he is not content to tell



## 46. HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.

**White are the decks with foam ; the winds aloud  
Howl o'er the masts, and sing thro' ev'ry shroud :**

" us that the mariners were in danger, but he brings them before our eyes, as in a picture, upon the point of being every moment overwhelmed by every wave ; nay, the very words and syllables of the description, give us an image of their peril." He shews, that a poet of less judgment would amuse himself in less important circumstances, and spoil the whole effect of the image by minute, ill-chosen, or superfluous particulars. Thus Aratus endeavouring to refine upon that line,

And instant death on ev'ry wave appears !

He turned it thus,

A slender plank preserves them from their fate.

Which, by flourishing upon the thought, has lost the loftiness and terrore of it, and is so far from improving the image, that it lessens and vanishes in his management. By confining the danger to a single line, he has scarce left the shadow of it ; and indeed the word *preserves* takes away even that. The same critick produces a fragment of an old poem on the Arimaspians, written in this false taste, whose author, he doubts not, imagined he had said something wonderful in the following affected verses. I have done my best to give them the same turn, and I believe there are those who will not think them bad ones.

Ye pow'rs ! what madness ! How on ships so frail,  
(Tremendous thought !) can thoughtless mortals faith,  
For stormy seas they quit the pleasing plain,  
Plant woods in waves, and dwell amidst the main.  
Far o'er the deep (a trackless path) they go,  
And wander oceans, in pursuit of woe.



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 47

**Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with  
fears ;** 756

**And instant death on ev'ry wave appears.  
So pale the Greeks the eyes of Hector meet,  
The chief so thunders, and so shakes the fleet.**

**As when a lion, rushing from his den,** 760  
**Amidst the plain of some wide-water'd fen,**  
(Where num'rous oxen, as at ease they feed,  
**At large expatiate o'er the ranker mead ;)**  
**Leaps on the herds before the herdsman's eyes ;**  
The trembling herdsman far to distance flies : 765  
**Some lordly bull (the rest dispers'd and fled)**  
**He singles out ; arrests, and lays him dead.**  
Thus from the rage of Jove-like Hector flew  
**All Greece in heaps ; but one he seiz'd, and flew :**  
**Mycenian Periphes, a mighty name,** 770  
**In wisdom great, in arms well known to fame ;**  
**The minister of stern Eurystheus' ire,**  
**Against Alcides, Copreus was his fire :**  
**The son redeem'd the honours of the race,**  
**A son as gen'rous as the fire was base ;** 775  
**O'er all his country's youth conspicuous far**  
**In ev'ry virtue, or of peace or war :**  
**But doom'd to Hector's stronger force to yield !**  
**Against the margin of his ample shield**

**No ease their hearts, no rest their eyes can find,  
On heav'n their looks, and on the waves their mind ;  
Sunk are their spirits, while their arms they rear ;  
And Gods are wearied with their fruitless pray'r.**



**He struck his hasty foot : his heels up-sprung ;  
Supine he fell ; his brazen helmet rung.** 781  
**On the fall'n chief th' invading Trojan prest,  
And plung'd the pointed jav'lin in his breast.  
His circling friends, who strove to guard too late  
Th' unhappy hero, fled, or shar'd his fate.** 785

**Chas'd from the foremost line, the Grecian train  
Now man the next, receding tow'r'd the main :  
Wedg'd in one body at the tents they stand,  
Wall'd round with sterns, a gloomy desp'rare band.  
Now manly shame forbids th' inglorious flight ;  
Now fear itself confines them to the fight : 791  
Man courage breathes in man ; but Nestor most  
(The sage preserver of the Grecian host)  
Exhorts, adjures, to guard these utmost shores ;  
And by their parents, by themselves, implores. 795  
**O friends ! be men : your gen'rous breasts in-  
flame****

**With equal honour, and with mutual shame !**

v. 796. *Nestor's speech.*] This popular harangue of Nestor is justly extolled as the strongest and most persuasive piece of oratory imaginable. It contains in it every motive by which men can be affected ; the preservation of their wives and children, the secure possessions of their fortunes, the respect of their living parents, and the due regard for the memory of those that were departed : by these he diverts the Grecians from any thoughts of flight in the article of extreme peril. *Eustathius.*

This noble exhortation is finely imitated by Tasso, Jerusalem, lib. x.

" — — O valoroso, hor via con questa  
" Faccia, a ritor la preda a noi rapita.



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 49

Think of your hopes, your fortunes ; all the care  
Your wives, your infants, and your parents share :  
Think of each living father's rev'rend head : 800  
Think of each ancestor with glory dead ;  
Absent, by me they speak, by me they sue ;  
They ask their safety, and their fame, from you :  
The Gods their fates on this one action lay,  
And all are lost, if you desert the day. 805

He spoke, and round him breath'd heroick fires ;  
Minerva seconds what the sage inspires.  
The mist of darkness Jove around them threw  
She clear'd, restoring all the war to view ;  
A sudden ray shot beaming o'er the plain, 810  
And shew'd the shores, the navy, and the main :  
Hector they saw, and all who fly, or fight,  
The scene wide-opening to the blaze of light.

“ L'immagine ad alcuno in mente destra,  
“ Glie la figura quasi, e glie l' addita  
“ De la pregante patria e de la mesta  
“ Supplice famigliola sbigottita.  
“ Credi (dicea) che la tua patri spieghi  
“ Per la mia lingua in tai parole i preghi.  
“ Guarda tù le mie leggi, e i sacri tempi  
“ Fà ch' io del sangue mio non bagni, e lavi,  
“ Assicura le virgin da gli empi,  
“ E i sepolchri, e le cinere de gli avi.  
“ A te piangendo i lor passati tempi  
“ Mostran la bianca chioma i vecchi gravi :  
“ A tè la moglie, e le mammelle, e'l petto  
“ Le cune, e i figli, e'l marital suo letto.”



First of the field great Ajax strikes their eyes,  
His port majestick, and his ample size : 815  
A pond'rous mace with studs of iron crown'd,  
Full twenty cubits long he swings around ;  
Nor fights like others fix'd to certain stands,  
But looks a moving tow'r above the bands ;  
High on the decks, with vast gigantick stride, 820  
The god-like hero strides from side to side.  
So when a horseman from the wat'ry mead  
(Skill'd in the manage of the bounding steed)  
Drives four fair coursers, practis'd to obey,  
To some great city thro' the publick way ; 825

v. 814. *First of the field, great Ajax.*] In this book Homer, to raise the valour of Hector, gives him Neptune for an antagonist; and to raise that of Ajax, he first opposed to him Hector, supported by Apollo, and now the same Hector supported and impelled by Jupiter himself. These are strokes of a master-hand. *Eustathius.*

v. 824. *Drives four fair coursers, &c.*] The comparison which Homer here introduces, is a demonstration that the art of mounting and managing horses was brought to so great a perfection in these early times, that one man could manage four at once, and leap from one to the other even when they run full speed. But some object, that the custom of riding was not known in Greece at the time of the Trojan war: besides, they say the comparison is not just, for the horses are said to run full speed, whereas the ships stand firm and unmoved. Had Homer put the comparison in the mouth of one of his heroes, the objection had been just, and he guilty of an inconsistency: but it is he himself who speaks: saddle-horses were in use in his age, and any poet may be allowed to illustrate pieces of antiquity by images familiar



**Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 51

**Safe in his art, as side by side they run,  
He shifts his seat, and vaults from one to one ;  
And now to this, and now to that he flies ;  
Admiring numbers follow with their eyes.**

**From ship to ship thus Ajax swiftly flew,** 830  
**No less the wonder of the warring crew.  
As furious Hector thunder'd threats aloud,  
And rush'd enrag'd before the Trojan crowd :  
Then swift invades the ships, whose beaky prores  
Lay rank'd contiguous on the bending shores : 835  
So the strong eagle from his airy height,  
Who marks the swans' or cranes' embody'd flight,  
Stoops down impetuous, while they light for food,  
And stooping, darkens with his wings the flood.  
Jove leads him on with his almighty hand, 840  
And breathes fierce spirits in his following band.  
The warring nations meet, the battle roars,  
Thick beats the combat on the sounding prores.  
Thou would'st have thought, so furious was their  
fire,  
No force could tame them, and no toil could tire ;  
As if new vigour from new fights they won, 846  
**And the long battle was but then begun.****

to his times. This is sufficient for the first objection ; nor is the second more reasonable ; for it is not absolutely necessary, that comparisons should correspond in every particular ; it suffices if there be a general resemblance. This is only introduced to shew the agility of Ajax, who passes swiftly from one vessel to another, and is therefore entirely just. *Eustathius.*



## 52 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XV.

Greece yet unconquer'd, kept alive the war,  
Secure of death, confiding in despair ;  
Troy in proud hopes, already view'd the main 850  
Bright with the blaze, and red with heroes slain !  
Like strength is felt from hope, and from despair,  
And each contends, as his were all the war.

'Twas thou, bold Hector ! whose resistless hand  
First seiz'd a ship on that contested strand ; 855  
The same which dead Protesilaüs bore,  
The first that touch'd th' unhappy Trojan shore :  
For this in arms the warring nations stood,  
And bath'd their gen'rous breasts with mutual  
blood. 859

No room to poize the lance or bend the bow ;  
But hand to hand, and man to man they grow :  
Wounded they wound ; and seek each other's hearts  
With falchions, axes, swords, and shorten'd darts.  
The falchions ring, shields rattle, axes sound,  
Swords flash in air, or glitter on the ground ; 865  
With streaming blood the slipp'ry shores are dy'd,  
And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

Still raging Hector with his ample hand  
Grapes the high stern, and gives this loud command.  
**Haste, bring the flames ! the toil of ten long  
years** 870

Is finish'd ; and the day desir'd appears !

v. 856. *The same which dead Protesilaüs bore.*] Homer  
feigns that Hector laid hold on the ship of the dead Pro-  
tesilaüs, rather than on that of any other, that he might  
not disgrace any of his Grecian generals. *Eustathius.*



## Book XV. H O M E R's I L I A D. 53

This happy day with acclamations greet,  
Bright with destruction of yon' hostile fleet.  
The coward counsels of a tim'rous throng  
Of rev'rend dotards, check'd our glory long : 875  
Too long Jove lull'd us with lethargick charms,  
But now in peals of thunder calls to arms :  
In this great day he crowns our full desires,  
Wakes all our force, and seconds all our fires.

v. 874. *The coward counsels of a tim'rous throng  
Of rev'rend dotards — ]*

Homer adds this with a great deal of art and prudence, to answer beforehand all the objections which he well foresaw might be made, because Hector never till now attacks the Grecians in their camp, or endeavours to burn their navy. He was retained by the elders of Troy, who frozen with fear at the sight of Achilles, never suffered him to march from the ramparts. Our author forgets nothing that has the resemblance of truth ; but he had yet a farther reason for inserting this, as it exalts the glory of his principal hero : these elders of Troy thought it less difficult to defeat the Greeks, though defended with strong entrenchments, while Achilles was not with them, than to overcome them without entrenchments when he assited them. And this is the reason that they prohibited Hector before, and permit him now, to sally upon the enemy. *Dacier.*

v. 877. *But now Jove calls to arms, &c.]* Hector seems to be sensible of an extraordinary impulse from heaven, signified by these words, *the most mighty hand of Jove pushing him on.* It is no more than any other person would be ready to imagine, who should rise from a state of distress or indolence, into one of good fortune, vigour, and activity. *Eustathius.*



He spoke—the warriours, at his fierce command,

880

Pour a new deluge on the Grecian band.

Ev'n Ajax paus'd (so thick the jav'lins fly)

Step'd back, and doubted or to live, or die.

Yet where the oars are plac'd, he stands to wait

What chief approaching dares attempt his fate :

Ev'n to the last, his naval charge defends, 886

Now shakes his spear, now lifts, and now pretends ;

Ev'n yet, the Greeks with piercing shouts inspires,

Amidst attacks, and deaths, and darts, and fires.

O friends ! O heroes ! names for ever dear, 890

Once sons of Mars, and thunderbolts of war !

v. 890. *The speech of Ajax.*] There is great strength, closeness, and spirit in this speech, and one might (like many criticks) employ a whole page in extolling and admiring it in general terms. But sure the perpetual rapture of such commentators, who are always giving us exclamations instead of criticisms, may be a mark of great admiration, but of little judgment. Of what use is this either to a reader who has a taste, or to one who has not ? To admire a fine passage, is what the former will do without us, and what the latter cannot be taught to do by us. However we ought gratefully to acknowledge the good-nature of most people, who are not only pleased with this superficial applause given to fine passages, but are likewise inclined to transfer to the critick, who only points at these beauties, part of the admiration justly due to the poet. This is a cheap, and easy way to fame, which many writers ancient and modern have pursued with great success. Formerly indeed this sort of authors had modesty, and were humbly content to call



## Book XV. HOMER's ILIAD. 55

Ah! yet be mindful of your old renown,  
Your great forefathers virtues and your own.  
What aids expect you in this utmost strait?  
What bulwarks rising between you and fate? 895  
No aids, no bulwarks your retreat attend,  
No friends to help, no city to defend.  
This spot is all you have, to lose or keep ;  
There stand the Trojans, and here rolls the deep.  
'Tis hostile ground you tread ; your native lands 900  
Far, far from hence : your fates are in your hands.

their performances only *Florilegia* or *Poies* : but some of late have passed such collections on the world for criticisms of great depth and learning, and seem to expect the same flowers should please us better, in these paltry nosegays of their own making up, than in the native gardens where they grew. As this practice of extolling without giving reasons is very convenient for most writers, so it excellently suits the ignorance or laziness of most readers, who will come into any sentiment rather than take the trouble of refuting it. Thus the compliment is mutual : for as such criticks do not tax their readers with any thought to understand them, so their readers in return, advance nothing in opposition to such criticks. They may go roundly on, admiring and exclaiming in this manner ; *What an exquisite spirit of poetry—How beautiful a circumstance—What delicacy of sentiments—With what art has the poet—In how sublime and just a manner—How finely imagined—How wonderfully beautiful and poetical—* And so proceed, without one reason to interrupt the course of their eloquence, most comfortably and ignorantly apostrophising to the end of the chapter.



**56 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XV.**

Raging he spoke ; nor farther wastes his breath,  
But turns his jav'lin to the work of death.  
**Whate'er bold Trojan arm'd his daring hands,**  
**Against the sable ships, with flaming brands ; 905**  
So well the chief his naval weapon sped,  
The luckless warriour at his stern lay dead :  
**Full twelve, the boldest, in a moment fell,**  
**Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.**



**T H E**  
**S I X T E E N T H   B O O K**  
**O F   T H E**  
**I   L   I   A   D.**



## THE A R G U M E N T.

**The sixth battle: the acts and death of Patroclus.**

**PATROCLUS** (*in pursuance of the request of Nestor in the eleventh book*) entreats Achilles to suffer him to go to the assistance of the Greeks with Achilles's troops and armour. He agrees to it, but at the same time charges him to content himself with rescuing the fleet, without farther pursuit of the enemy. The armour, horses, soldiers, and officers of Achilles are described. Achilles offers a libation for the success of his friend, after which Patroclus leads the Myrmidons to battle. The Trojans, at the sight of Patroclus in Achilles's armour, taking him for that hero, are cast into the utmost consternation: he beats them off from the vessels. Hector himself flies, Sarpedon is killed, though Jupiter was averse to his fate. Several other particulars of the battle are described; in the heat of which, Patroclus, neglecting the orders of Achilles, pursues the foe to the walls of Troy; where Apollo repulses and disarms him, Euphorbus wounds him, and Hector kills him: which concludes the book.



THE  
\* SIXTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

**S**o warr'd both armies on th' ensanguin'd shore,  
While the black vessels smok'd with human  
gore.

Meantime Patroclus to Achilles flies ;  
The streaming tears fall copious from his eyes ;

\* We have at the entrance of this book one of the most beautiful parts of the Iliad. The two different characters are admirably sustained in the dialogue of the two heroes, wherein there is 'not a period but strongly marks not only their natural temper, but that particular disposition of mind in either, which arises from the present state of affairs. ~~XXV~~ see Patroclus touched with the deepest compassion for the misfortune of the Greeks, (whom the Trojans had forced to retreat to their ships, and which ships were at the point of burning) prostrating himself before the vessel of Achilles, and pouring out his tears at his feet. Achilles, struck with the grief of his friend, demands the cause of it. Patroclus, pointing to the ships, where the flames already began to rise, tells him he



## 60 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Not faster, trickling to the plains below, 5  
From the tall rock the fable waters flow.

is harder than the rocks or sea which lay in prospect before them, if he is not touched with so moving a spectacle, and can see in cold blood his friends perishing before his eyes. As nothing can be more natural and affecting than the speech of Patroclus, so nothing is more lively and picturesque than the attitude he is here described in.

The *pathetick* of Patroclus's speech is finely contrasted by the *fiertè* of that of Achilles. While the former is melting with sorrow for his countrymen, the utmost he can hope from the latter, is but to borrow his armour and troops; to obtain his personal assistance he knows is impossible. At the very instant that Achilles is moved to ask the cause of his friend's concern, he seems to say that nothing could deserve it but the death of their fathers: and in the same breath speaks of the total destruction of the Greeks as of too slight a cause for tears. Patroclus, at the opening of this speech, dares not name Agamemnon even for being wounded; and after he has tried to bend him by all the arguments that could affect an human breast, concludes by supposing that some oracle or supernatural inspiration is the cause that withdraws his arms. What can match the fierceness of his answer: which implies, that not the oracles of Heaven itself should be regarded, if they stood in competition with his resentment: that if he yields, it must be 'gh his own mere motive: the only reason he πάστεν yield, is that nature itself cannot support anger eternal: and if he yields now, it is only because he had before determined to do so at a certain time, (Il. ix. v. 767.) That time was not till the flames should approach to his own ships, till the last article of danger, and that not of danger to Greece, but to himself. Thus his very pity



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 61

Divine Pelides, with compassion mov'd,  
Thus spoke, indulgent to his best belov'd.

has the sternest qualifications in the world. After all, what is it he yields to? only to suffer his friend to go in his stead, just to save them from present ruin; but he expressly forbids him to proceed any farther in their assistance, than barely to put out the fires, and secure his own and his friends return into their country: and all this concludes with a wish, that (if it were possible) every Greek and every Trojan might perish except themselves. Such is that *wrath* of Achilles, that more than wrath, as the Greek *μῆνες* implies, which Homer has painted in so strong a colouring.

v. 8. *Indulgent to his best belov'd.]* The friendship of Achilles and Patroclus is celebrated by all antiquity: and Homer, notwithstanding the anger of Achilles was his professed subject, has found the secret to discover, through that very anger, the softer parts of his character. In this view we shall find him generous in his temper, despising gain and booty, and as far as his honour is not concerned, fond of his mistress, and easy to his friend: not proud, but when injured; and not more revengeful when ill used, than grateful and gentle when respectfully treated. "Patroclus (says Philostratus, who probably grounds his assertion on some ancient tradition) "was not so much elder than Achilles as to pretend to "dī ~~him~~, but of a tender, modest, and unassuming "constant and diligent in his attendance, and "desiring to have no affections but those of his friend." The same author has a very pretty passage, where Ajax is introduced enquiring of Achilles, "Which of all his warlike actions were the most difficult and dangerous "to him? He answers, those which he undertook for "the sake of his friends. And which (continues Ajax) "were the most pleasing and easy? The very same, re-



## 62 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Patroclus, say, what grief thy bosom bears,  
That flows so fast in these unmanly tears ? 10  
No girl, no infant whom the mother keeps  
From her lov'd breast, with fonder passion weeps ;

" plies Achilles. He then asks him, Which of all the  
" wounds he ever bore in battle was the most painful  
" to him ? Achilles answers, That which he received  
" from Hector. But Hector, says Ajax, never gave you  
" a wound. Yes, replies Achilles, a mortal one, when  
" he slew my friend Patroclus."

It is said in the life of Alexander the Great, that when that prince visited the monuments of the heroes at Troy, and placed a crown upon the tomb of Achilles, his friend Hephaestion placed another on that of Patroclus, as an intimation of his being to Alexander what the other was to Achilles. On which occasion the saying of Alexander is recorded ; *That Achilles was happy indeed, for having had such a friend to love him living, and such a poet to celebrate him dead.*

v. 11. *No girl, no infant, &c.]* I know the obvious translation of this passage makes the comparison consist only in the tears of the infant, applied to those of Patroclus. But certainly the idea of the simile will be much finer, if we comprehend also in it the mother's fondness and concern, awakened by this uneasiness of the child, which no less aptly corresponds with the tenderness of Achilles on the sight of his friend's affliction. There is yet a third branch of the comparison, in ~~the~~ and constant application the infant makes to the master, in the same manner as Patroclus follows ~~Achilles~~ with his grief, till he forces him to take notice of it. I think (all these circumstances laid together) nothing can be more affecting or exact in all its views, than this similitude : which, without that regard, has perhaps seemed but low and trivial to an unreflecting reader.



## Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D. 63

Not more the mother's soul that infant warms,  
Clung to her knees, and reaching at her arms,  
Than thou hast mine! Oh tell me, to what end  
Thy melting sorrows thus pursue thy friend? 16

Griev'st thou' for me, or for my martial band?  
Or come sad tidings from our native land?  
Our fathers live, (our first, most tender care)  
Thy good Menœtius breathes the vital air, 20  
And hoary Pelcus yet extends his days;  
Pleas'd in their age to hear their children's praise.

Or may some meaner cause thy pity claim?  
Perhaps yon' reliques of the Grecian name,  
Doom'd in their ships to sink by fire and sword, 25  
And pay the forfeit of their haughty lord?  
Whate'er the cause, reveal thy secret care,  
And speak those sorrows which a friend would share.

A sigh, that instant, from his bosom broke,  
Another follow'd, and Patroclus spoke. 30

Let Greece at length with pity touch thy breast,  
Thyself a Greek; and, once, of Greeks the best!

v. 31. *Let Greece at length with pity touch thy breast.]* The commentators labour to prove, that the words in the ἔγινε, which begin this speech, μὴ νηπίσα, Be not, &c. - not meant to desire Achilles to bear no far-  
- resentment against the Greeks, but only not to be dispiaced at the tears which Patroclus sheds for their misfortune. Patroclus (they say) was not so imprudent to begin his intercession in that manner, when there was need of something more insinuating. I take this to be an excess of refinement: the purpose of every period in his speech is to persuade Achilles to lay aside his anger;



## 64 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Lo ! ev'ry chief that might her fate prevent,  
Lies pierc'd with wounds, and bleeding in his tent.  
Eurypylus, Tydides, Atreus' son, 35 }  
And wise Ulysses, at the navy groan  
More for their country's wounds, than for their own. }

why then may he not begin by desiring it ? The whole question is, whether he may speak openly in favour of the Greeks in the first half of the verse, or in the latter ? For in the same line he represents their distress,

τοῖος γαὶς ἀχος βεβίνειν Ἀχαιος.

It is plain he treats him without much reserve, calls him implacable, inexorable, and even mischievous (for *αἰραγέτης* implies no less.) I do not see wherein the caution of this speech consists ; it is a generous, unartful petition, whereof Achilles's nature would much more approve, than of all the artifice of Ulysses, (to which he expressed his hatred in the ninth book, v. 412.)

v. 35. *Eurypylus, Tydides, Atreus' son,*  
*And wise Ulysses——]*

Patroclus, in mentioning the wounded princes to Achilles, takes care not to put Agamemnon first, lest that odious name striking his ear on a sudden, should shut it against the rest of his discourse : neither does he name him last, for fear Achilles dwelling upon it should fall into a passion : but he slides it into the middle, mixing on-founding it with the rest, that it might not be too much notice of, and that the names which precede and follow it may diminish the hatred it might excite. Wherefore he does not so much as accompany it with an epithet.

I think the foregoing remark of Eustathius is very ingenious, and I have given into it so far, as to chuse rather to make Patroclus call him Atreus' son than



**Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 65

Their pain, soft arts of pharmacy can ease,  
Thy breast alone no lenitives appease.

May never rage like thine my soul enslave, 40  
O great in vain ! unprofitably brave !  
Thy country slighted in her last distress,  
What friend, what man, from thee shall hope redress ?

No—men unborn, and ages yet behind,  
Shall curse that fierce, that unforgiving mind. 45

O man unpitying ! if of man thy race ;  
But sure thou spring'st not from a soft embrace,  
Nor ever am'rous hero caus'd thy birth,  
Nor ever tender Goddess brought thee forth. 49  
Some rugged rock's hard entrails gave thee form,  
And raging seas produc'd thee in a storm,  
A soul well-suiting that tempestuous kind,  
So rough thy manners, so untam'd thy mind.

If some dire oracle thy breast alarm,  
If aught from Jove, or Thetis, stop thy arm, 55  
Some beam of comfort yet on Greece may shine,  
If I but lead the Myrmidonian line :  
Clad in thy dreadful arms if I appear,  
Proud — ~~—~~ tremble, and desert the war :  
By person Greece shall win the day, 60  
And t. ~~y~~ mere image chase her foes ~~away~~.

Agamemnon, which yet farther softens it, since thus it might as well be imagined he spoke of Menelaus, as of Agamemnon.

v. 61. *And thy mere image chase her foes away.]* It is hard to conceive a greater compliment, or one that could



66 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Prest'd by fresh forces, her o'erlabour'd train  
Shall quit the ships, and Greece respire again.

Thus, blind to Fate ! with supplicating breath,  
Thou begg'st his arms, and in his arms thy death.  
Unfortunately good ! a boding sigh                    66  
Thy friend return'd ; and with it, this reply.

Patroclus ! thy Achilles knows no fears ;  
Nor words from Jove, nor oracles he hears ;  
Nor aught a mother's caution can suggest ;            70  
The tyrant's pride lies rooted in my breast.  
My wrongs, my wrongs, my constant thought en-  
gage,

Those, my sole oracles, inspire my rage :  
I made him tyrant : gave him pow'r to wrong  
Ev'n me : I felt it ; and shall feel it long.            75  
The maid, my black-ey'd maid, he forc'd away,  
Due to the toils of many a well-fought day ;

more touch the warlike ambition of Achilles, than this which Homer puts into the mouth of Patroclus. It was also an encomium which he could not suspect of flattery ; since the person who made it desires to hazard his life upon the security that the enemy could not support the sight of the very armour of Achilles : ~~and~~ Achilles himself seems to entertain no less a thought ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> answer to this speech, where he ascribes the flight of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> blazing of his helmet : a circumstance wonderfully fine, and nobly exalting the idea of this hero's terrible character. Besides all this, Homer had it in view to prepare hereby the wonderful incident that is to ensue in the eighteenth book, where the very sight of Achilles from his ship turns the fortune of the war.



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 67

Due to my conquest of her father's reign ;  
Due to the votes of all the Grecian train. 79  
From me he forc'd her ; me, the bold and brave ;  
Disgrac'd, dishonour'd, like the meanest slave.  
But bear we this—the wrongs I grieve are past ;  
'Tis time our fury should relent at last :  
I fix'd its date ; the day I wish'd appears : }  
Now Hector to my ships the battle bears, 85 }  
The flames my eyes, the shouts invade my ears. }  
Go then, Patroclus ! court fair honour's charms.  
In Troy's fam'd fields, and in Achilles' arms :.  
Lead forth my martial Myrmidons to fight,  
Go save the fleets, and conquer in my right. 90  
See the thin reliques of their baffled band,  
At the last edge of yon' deserted land !  
Behold all Ilion on their ships descends ;  
How the cloud blackens, how the storm impends !  
It was not thus, when, at my sight amaz'd, 95  
Troy saw and trembled, as this helmet blaz'd :  
Had not th' injurious king our friendship lost,  
Yon' ample trench had bury'd half her host.  
No camps, no bulwarks now the Trojans fear,  
Those are not dreadful, no Achilles there : 100  
[L. "Higer flames the lance of Tydeus' son ;  
No m-- your gen'ral calls his heroes on ;

v. 101. *No longer flames the lance of Tydeus' son.*] By what Achilles here says, joining Diomede to Agamemnon in this taunting reflection, one may justly suspect there was some particular disagreement and emulation between these two heroes. This we may suppose to be



## 68 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XVI.

Hector, alone, I hear ; his dreadful breath  
Commands your slaughter, or proclaims your death.  
Yet now, Patroclus, issue to the plain ;      105 }  
Now save the ships, the rising fires restrain,  
And give the Greeks to visit Greece again.      }  
But heed my words, and mark a friend's command  
Who trusts his fame and honours in thy hand,

the more natural, because Diomedes was of all the Greeks confessedly the nearest in fame and courage to Achilles, and therefore most likely to move his envy, as being the most likely to supply his place. The same sentiments are to be observed in Diomedes with regard to Achilles ; he is always confident in his own valour, and therefore in their greatest extremities he no where acknowledges the necessity of appeasing Achilles, but always in council appears most forward and resolute to carry on the war without him. For this reason he was not thought a fit ambassador to Achilles ; and upon return from the embassy, he breaks into a severe reflection, not only upon Achilles, but even upon Agamemnon, who had sent this embassy to him. *I wish thou hadst not sent these supplications and gifts to Achilles ; his insolence was extreme before, but now his arrogance will be intolerable ; let us not mind whether he goes or stays, but do our duty and prepare for the battle.* Eustathius observes, that Achilles uses this particular expressing concerning Diomedes,

Oἱ γὰρ Τυδεῖδεω Διομήδεος ἐν παλάμησι  
Μαίνεται ἐσχεῖν —

because it was the same boasting expression Diomedes had applied to himself, Il. viii. v. 111. of the original. But this having been said only to Nestor in the heat of fight, how can we suppose Achilles had notice of it ? this observation shews the great diligence, if not the judgment, of the good archbishop.



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 69

And from thy deeds expects, th' Achaian host 110  
Shall render back the beauteous maid he lost.  
Rage uncontroll'd thro' all the hostile crew,  
But touch not Hector, Hector is my due.

v. 111. *Shall render back the beauteous maid.*] But this is what the Greeks had already offered to do, and which ~~he~~ has refused ; this then is an inequality in Achilles's minders. Not at all : Achilles is still ambitious ; when he refused these presents, the Greeks were not low enough, he would not receive them till they were reduced to the last extremity, and till he was sufficiently revenged by their losses. *Dacier.*

v. 123. *But touch not Hector.*] This injunction of Achilles is highly correspondent to his ambitious character : he is by no means willing that the conquest of Hector should be atchieved by any hand but his own : in that point of glory he is jealous even of his dearest friend. This also wonderfully strengthens the idea we have of his implacability and resentment ; since at the same time that nothing can move him to assist the Greeks in the battle, we see it is the utmost force upon his nature to abstain from it, by the fear he manifests lest any other should subdue this hero.

The verse I am speaking of,

Τες αὖτες Εἰδότες αὐτὸς δὲ οὐκέτι σχεδόν τις εἶπεν,

is cited by Diogenes Laertius as Homer's, but not found to be in the editions before that of Barnes's. It is certainly one of the instructions of Achilles to Patroclus, and therefore properly placed in this speech ; but I believe better after

———— ποτὶ δέ, αὐλαζά δῶξε πάρεσσιν,

than where he has inserted it four lines above : for Achilles's instructions not beginning till v. 83.

ποτὶ δέ, αὐτοὶ τῷ μήθε τέλος οὐ φέσσοι θεῖσιν,



## 70 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Tho' Jove in thunder should command the war ;  
Be just, consult my glory, and forbear. 115  
The fleet once sav'd, desist from farther chace,  
Nor lead to Ilion's walls the Grecian race ;  
Some adverse God, thy rashness may destroy ;  
Some God, like Phœbus, ever kind to Troy. 119  
Let Greece redeem'd from this destructive strait,  
Do her own work ; and leave the rest to Fate.  
Oh ! would to all th' immortal pow'rs above,  
Apollo, Pallas, and almighty Jove !

Is not so proper to divide this material one from the rest. Whereas (according to the method I propose) the whole context will lie in this order. *Obey my injunctions, as you consult my interest and honour. Make as great a slaughter of the Trojans as you will, but abstain from Hector. And as soon as you have repulsed them from the ships, be satisfied and return : for it may be fatal to pursue the victory to the walls of Troy.*

v. 115. *Consult my glory, and forbear.]* Achilles tells Patroclus, that if he pursues the foe too far, whether he shall be victor or vanquished, it must prove either way prejudicial to his glory. For by the former, the Greeks having no more need of Achilles's aid, will not restore him his captive, nor try any more to appease him by presents : by the latter, his arms would be left in the enemy's hands, and he himself upbraided with the death of Patroclus. *Dacier.*

v. 122. *Oh ! would to all, &c.]* Achilles from his overflowing gain, vents this execration : the Trojans he hates as professed enemies, and he detests the Grecians as people who had with calmness overlooked his wrongs. Some of the ancient criticks not entering into the manners of



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 71

That not one Trojan might be left alive,  
And not a Greek of all the race survive ; 125  
Might only we the vast destruction shun,  
And only we destroy th' accursed town !

Achilles, would have expunged this imprecation, as uttering an universal malevolence to mankind. This violence agrees perfectly with his implacable character. But or & may observe at the same time the mighty force of friendship, if for the sake of his dear Patroclus he will protect and secure those Greeks, whose destruction he wishes. What a little qualifies this bloody wish, is, that we may suppose it spoken with great unreservedness, as in secret, and between friends.

Mons. de la Motte has a lively remark upon the absurdity of this wish. Upon the supposition that Jupiter had granted it, if all the Trojans and Greeks were destroyed, and only Achilles and Patroclus left to conquer Troy, he asks what would be the victory without any enemies, and the triumph without any spectators ? but the answer is very obvious ; Homer intends to paint a man in passion ; the wishes and schemes of such an one are seldom conformable to reason ; and the manners are preserved the better, the less they are represented to be so.

This brings into my mind that curse in Shakespeare, where that admirable master of nature makes Northumberland, in the rage of his passion, wish for an universal destruction.

— — — — Now let not nature's hand  
Keep the wild flood confin'd ! Let order die,  
And let the world no longer be a stage  
To feed contention in a ling'ring act :  
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain  
Reign in all bosoms, that each heart being set  
On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,  
And darkness be the burier of the dead !



Such conf'rence held the chiefs ; while on the strand,

Great Jove with conquest crown'd the Trojan band.  
Ajax no more the sounding storm sustain'd,      130  
So thick, the darts an iron tempest rain'd :

v. 130. *Ajax no more, &c.*] This description of Ajax wearied out with battle, is a passage of exquisite life and beauty ; yet what I think nobler than the description itself, is what he says at the end of it, that his hero even in this excess of fatigue and languor, could scarce be moved from his post by the efforts of a whole army. Virgil has copied the description very exactly, *AEn.* ix.

“ Ergo nec clypeo juvenis subsistere tantum,  
“ Nec dextra valet : injectis sic undique telis  
“ Obruitur. Strepit assiduo cava tempora circum  
“ Tinnitu galea, & saxis solida æra fatiscunt :  
“ Discusseque jubæ capiti, nec sufficit umbo  
“ Ictibus : ingeminant hastis & Troës, & ipse  
“ Fulmineus Mnestheus ; tum toto corpore sudor  
“ Liquitur, & piceum, nec respirare potestas,  
“ Flumen agit ; fessos quatit æger anhelitus artus.”

The circumstances which I have marked in a different character are improvements upon Homer, and the last verse excellently expresses, in the short catching up of the numbers, the quick short panting, represented in the image. The reader may add to the comparison an imitation of the same place in *Tasso*, Cant. ix. St. 97.

“ Fatto intanto hà il soldan cio, ch'e concesso .  
“ Fare a terrena forza, hor piu non puote :  
“ Tutto e sangue e sudore ; un grâve, e spesso  
“ Anhelar gli ange il petto, e i fianche scote.  
“ Langue sotto lo scudo il brachio oppreso,  
“ Gira la destra il ferro in pigre rote ;



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 73

On his tir'd arm the weighty buckler hung ;  
His hollow helm with failing jay'lins rung,  
His breath, in quick, short pantings, comes, and  
goes ; 134

And painful sweat from all his members flows.  
Spent and o'erpower'd, he barely breathes at moft ;  
Yet scarce an army stirs him from his poft :  
Dangers on dangers all around him grow,  
And toil to toil, and woe succeeds to woe. 139

Say, Muses, thron'd above the starry frame,  
How first the navy blaz'd with Trojan flame ?

Stern Hector wav'd his sword : and standing near  
Where furious Ajax ply'd his ashen spear,  
Full on the lance a stroke so justly sped, 144  
That the broad falchion lopp'd its brazen head :  
His pointless spear the warriour shakes in vain ;  
The brazen head falls sounding on the plain.  
Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,  
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign ;

“ Spessa, e non taglia, e divenendo ottuso  
“ Perduto il brando omai di brando hà l'uso.”

v. 148. *Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,  
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign.]*

In the Greek there is added an explication of this sign,  
which has no other allusion to the action, but a very odd  
one in a single phrase or metaphor.

— ὅ τα πάγχυ μάχης θπὶ μήδεα κείεται  
ζεὺς ἀπιέρειτης, Τρώεσσι δὲ βαθλούκην.

Which may be translated,



## 74 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Warm'd, he retreats. Then swift from all sides  
pour

150

The hissing brands ; thick streams the fiery show'r ;  
O'er the high stern the curling volumes rise,  
And sheets of rolling smoke involve the skies.

Divine Achilles view'd the rising flames, 154  
And smote his thigh, and thus aloud exclaims.  
**Arm, arm, Patroclus ! Lo, the blaze aspires !**  
The glowing ocean reddens with the fires.  
**Arm, ere our vessels catch the spreading flame ;**  
**Arm, ere the Grecians be no more a name ;**

So seem'd their hopes cut off by heav'n's high Lord,  
So doom'd to fall before the Trojan sword.

Chapman endeavours to account for the meanness of this conceit, by the gross wit of Ajax ; who seeing the head of his lance cut off, took it into his fancy, that Jupiter would in the same manner cut off the counsels and schemes of the Greeks. For to understand this far-fetched apprehension gravely, as the commentators have done, is indeed (to use the words of Chapman) most *dull* and *Ajantical*. I believe no man will blame me for leaving these lines out of the text.

v. 154. *Achilles view'd the rising flames.*] This event is prepared with a great deal of art and probability. That effect which a multitude of speeches was not able to accomplish, one lamentable spectacle, the sight of the flames, at length, brings to pass, and moves Achilles to compassion. This it was (say the ancients) that moved the tragedians to make visible representations of misery ; for the spectators beholding people in unhappy circumstances, find their souls more deeply touched, than by all the strains of rhetorick. *Eustathius.*



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 75

I haste to bring the troops—The hero said ; 160  
The friend with ardour and with joy obey'd.

He cas'd his limbs in brass ; and first around  
His manly legs, with silver buckles bound  
The clasping greaves ; then to his breast applies  
The flamy cuirass, of a thousand dyes ; 165  
Emblaz'd with studs of gold his falchion shone  
By the rich belt, as in a starry zone :  
Achilles' shield his ample shoulders spread,  
Achilles' helmet nodded o'er his head :  
Adorn'd in all his terrible array, 170  
He flash'd around intolerable day.  
Alone, untouched, Pelides' jav'lin stands,  
Not to be pois'd but by Pelides' hands ;

v. 162. *He cas'd his limbs in brass, &c.]* Homer does not amuse himself here to describe these arms of Achilles at length ; for besides that the time permits it not, he reserves this description for the new armour which Thetis shall bring that hero ; a description which will be placed in a more quiet moment, and which will give him all the leisure of making it, without requiring any force to introduce it. *Eustathius.*

v. 172. *Alone, untouched, Pelides' jav'lin stands.]* This passage affords another instance of the stupidity of the commentators, who are here most absurdly inquisitive after the reasons why Patroclus does not take the spear, as well as the other arms of Achilles ? he thought himself a very happy man, who first found out, that Homer had certainly given this spear to Patroclus, if he had not foreseen that when it should be lost in his future unfortunate engagement, Vulcan could not furnish Achilles



## 76 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book LVI.

From Peltion's shady brow the plant entire  
Old Chiron rent, and shap'd it for his sire ; 175  
Whose son's great arm alone the weapon wields,  
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.

Then brave Automedon (an honour'd name,  
The second to his lord in love and fame,  
In peace his friend, and partner of the war) 180  
The winged coursers harness'd to the car ;

Xanthus and Balius, of immortal breed,  
Sprung from the wind, and like the wind in speed :

with another ; being no joiner, but only a smith. Virgil, it seems, was not so precisely acquainted with Vulcan's disability to profess the two trades : since he has, without any scruple, employed him in making a spear, as well as the other arms for Æneas. Nothing is more obvious than this thought of Homer, who intended to raise the idea of his hero, by giving him such a spear as no other could wield : the description of it in this place is wonderfully pompous.

v. 183. *Sprung from the wind.*] It is a beautiful invention of the poet, to represent the wonderful swiftness of the horses of Achilles, by saying they were begotten by the western wind. This fiction is truly poetical, and very proper in the way of natural allegory. However, it is not altogether improbable our author might have designed it even in the literal sense : nor ought the notion to be thought very extravagant in a poet, since grave naturalists have seriously vouched the truth of this kind of generation. Some of them relate as an undoubted piece of natural history, that there was anciently a breed of this kind of horses in Portugal, whose dams were impregnated by a western wind : Varro, Columella, and Pliny, are all of this opinion. I shall only mention the



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 77

Whom the wing'd Harpy, swift Podarge, bore,  
By Zephyr pregnant on the breezy shore: 185  
Swift Pegasus was added to their side,  
(Once great Aëtion's, now Achilles' pride)  
Who, like in strength, in swiftness, and in grace,  
A mortal courser, match'd th' immortal race. 189  
Achilles speeds from tent to tent, and warms  
His hardy Myrmidons to blood and arms.

words of Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 42. *Constat in Lusitania circa Olyssiponem oppidum, & Tagum amnem, equas Favonio flante obversas animalem concipere spiritum, idque partum fieri & gigni pernicissimum.* See also the same author, l. iv. c. 12. l. xvi. c. 25. Possibly Homer had this opinion in view, which we see has authority more than sufficient to give it place in poetry. Virgil has given us a description of this manner of conception, Georgick iii.

" Continuoque avidis ubi subdita flamma medullis,  
" Vere magis (quia vere calor redit ossibus) illæ  
" Ore omnes versæ in zephyrum, stant rupibus altis,  
" Exceptantque leves auras: & saepe sine ulla  
" Conjugiis vento gravidæ (mirabile dictu)  
" Saxa per & scopulos & depresso convales  
" Diffugiunt."—

v. 186. *Swift Pegasus was added to their side.]* Here was a necessity for a spare horse (as in another place Nestor had occasion for the same) that if by any misfortune one of the other horses should fall, there might be a fresh one ready at hand to supply his place. This is good management in the poet, to deprive Achilles not only of his charioteer and his arms, but one of his inestimable horses. *Eustathius.*



## 78 HOMER's ILIAD Book XVI.

All breathing death, around the chief they stand,  
A grim terrific formidable band :  
Grim as voracious wolves, that seek the springs 194  
When scalding thirst their burning bowels wrings ;

v. 194. *Grim as voracious wolves, &c.]* There is scarce any picture in Homer so much in the savage and terrible way, as this comparison of the Myrmidons to wolves. it puts one in mind of the pieces of Spagnolett, or Salvator Rosa : each circumstance is made up of images very strongly coloured and horridly lively. The principal design is to represent the stern looks and fierce appearance of the Myrmidons, a gaunt and ghastly train of raw-bon'd bloody-minded fellows. But besides this, the poet seems to have some farther view in so many different particulars of the comparison : their eager desire of fight is hinted at by the wolves thirsting after water : their strength and vigour for the battle is intimated by their being filled with food : and as these beasts are said to have their thirst sharper after they are gorged with prey ; so the Myrmidons are strong and vigorous with ease and refreshment, and therefore more ardently desirous of the combat. This image of their *Strength* is inculcated by several expressions both in the simile and the application, and seems designed in contrast to the other Greeks, who are all wasted and spent with toil.

We have a picture much of this kind given us by Milton, lib. x. where Death is let loose into the new creation, to glut his appetite, and discharge his rage upon all nature..-

— — — — — As when a flock  
Of ravenous fowls, tho' many a league remote,  
Against the day of battle, to a field  
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd  
With scent of living carcasses, design'd  
For death the following day, in bloody fight.



Book XVI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 79

When some tall stag, fresh-slaughter'd in the wood,  
Has drench'd their wide infatiate throats with  
blood,

To the black fount they rush, a hideous throng,  
With paunch distended, and with lolling tongue,  
Fire fills their eye, their black jaws belch the  
gore, 200

And gorg'd with slaughter, still they thirst for more.  
Like furious rush'd the Myrmidonian crew,  
Such their dread strength, and such their deathful  
view.

High in the midst the great Achilles stands,  
Directs their order, and the war commands. 205  
He, lov'd of Jove, had lanch'd for Ilion's shores  
Full fifty vessels, mann'd with fifty oars :  
Five chosen leaders the fierce bands obey,  
Himself supreme in valour, as in sway. 209

So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd  
His nostril wide into the murky air,  
Sagacious of his quarry from afar.

And by Tasso, Canto x. St. 2. of the furious Soldan  
covered with blood, and thirsting for fresh slaughter.

“ Cum dal chiuso ovil cacciato viene  
“ Lupo tal’ hor, che fugge, e si nasconde ;  
“ Che se ben del gran ventre omai ripiene  
“ Ha l’ingorde voragine profonde.  
“ Avido pur di sangue anco fuor tienne  
“ La lingua, e’l sugge da le labbra immonde,  
“ Tal’ ei sen gia dopo il sanguingo stratio  
“ De la sua cupa fame anco non satio.



80. HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

First march'd Menestheus, of celestial birth,  
Deriv'd from thee, whose waters wash the earth,  
Divine Spirchius ! Jove-descended flood !

A mortal mother mixing with a God.

Such was Menestheus, but miscall'd by fame  
The son of Borus, that espous'd the dame. 215

Eudorus next ; whom Polymeie the gay  
Fam'd in the graceful dance, produc'd to day.  
Her, fly Cellenius lov'd, on her would gaze,  
As with swift step she form'd the running maze :  
To her high chamber from Diana's quire, 220  
The God pursu'd her, urg'd, and crown'd his fire.

v. 211. *Deriv'd from thee, whose waters, &c.*] Homer seems resolved that every thing about Achilles shall be miraculous. We have seen his very horses are of celestial origin ; and now his commanders, though vulgarly reputed the sons of men, are represented as the real offspring of some Deity. The poet thus enhances the admiration of his chief hero by every circumstance with which his imagination could furnish him.

v. 220. *To her high chamber.*] It was the custom of those times to assign the uppermost rooms to the women, that they might be the farther removed from commerce : wherefore Penelope in the Odyssey mounts up into a garret, and there sits to her business. So Priam, in the sixth book, v. 248. of the original, had chambers for the ladies of his court, under the roof of his palace.

The Lacedæmonians called these high apartments ἄνε ; and as the word also signifies eggs, it is probable it was this that gave occasion to the fable of Helen's birth, who is said to be born from an egg. *Eustathius.*



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 8t

The son confess'd his father's heav'nly race,  
And heir'd his mother's swiftness in the chace.  
Strong Echeclëus, blest in all those charms,  
That pleas'd a God, succeeded to her arms ; 225  
Not conscious of those loves, long hid from fame,  
With gifts of price he sought and won the dame ;  
Her secret offspring to her fire she bare ;  
Her fire caress'd him with a parent's care.

Pisander follow'd ; matchless in his art 230  
To wing the spear, or aim the distant dart ;  
No hand so sure of all th' Emathian line,  
Or if a surer, great Patroclus ! thine.

The fourth by Phœnix' grave command was  
grac'd ;  
Laërces' valiant offspring led the last. 235

Soon as Achilles with superiour care  
Had call'd the chiefs, and order'd all the war,  
This stern remembrance to his troops he gave :  
Ye far-fam'd Myrmidons, ye fierce and brave !  
Think with what threats you dar'd the Trojan  
throng, 240

Think what reproach these ears endur'd so long,  
“ Stern son of Peleus,” (thus ye us'd to say,  
While restless, raging in your ships you lay)  
“ Oh nurs'd with gall, unknowing how to yield,  
“ Whose rage defrauds us of so fam'd a field, 245  
“ If that dire fury must for ever burn,  
“ What make we here ? Return, ye chiefs return !”



## 82 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Such were your words—Now warriours grieve no more.

Lo there the Trojans! bathe your swords in gore !  
This day shall give you all your soul demands ; 250  
Glut all your hearts ! and weary all your hands !  
Thus while he rous'd the fire in ev'ry breast,  
Close, and more close, the list'ning cohorts prest ;  
Ranks wedg'd in ranks ; of arms a steely ring  
Still grows, and spreads, and thickens round the king. 255

As when a circling wall the builder forms,  
Of strength defensive against wind and storms,  
Compacted stones the thick'ning work compose,  
And round him wide the rising structure grows :  
So helm to helm, and crest to crest they throng,  
Shield urg'd on shield, and man drove man a-long ; 261

Thick, undistinguish'd plumes, together join'd,  
Float in one sea, and wave before the wind.

Far o'er the rest, in glitt'ring pomp appear  
There bold Automedon, Patroclus here ; 265  
Brothers in arms, with equal fury fir'd ;  
Two friends, two bodies with one soul inspir'd.

But mindful of the Gods Achilles went  
To the rich coffer in his shady tent :  
There lay on heaps his various garments roll'd, 270  
And costly furs, and carpets stiff with gold.  
(The presents of the silver-footed dame)  
From thence he took a bowl, of antique frame,



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 83

Which never man had stain'd with ruddy wine,  
Nor rais'd in off'rings to the Pow'rs divine, 275  
But Peleus' son ; and Peleus' son to none  
Had rais'd in offrings, but to Jove alone.

This ting'd with sulphur, sacred first to flame,  
He purg'd ; and wash'd it in the running stream.  
Then cleans'd his hands ; and fixing for a space  
His eyes on heaven, his feet upon the place 281  
Of sacrifice, the purple draught he pour'd  
Forth in the midst ; and thus the God implor'd.

Oh thou Supreme ! high-thron'd all height above !  
Oh great Pelasgick, Dodonæan Jove ! 285

v. 283. *And thus the God implor'd.*] Though the character of Achilles every where shews a mind swayed with unbounded passions, and entirely regardless of all human authority and law ; yet he preserves a constant respect to the Gods, and appears as zealous in the sentiments and actions of piety as any hero of the Iliad ; who indeed are all remarkable this way. The present passage is an exact description and perfect ritual of the ceremonies on these occasions. Achilles, though an urgent affair called for his friend's assistance, yet would not suffer him to enter the fight, till in a most solemn manner he had recommended him to the protection of Jupiter : and this I think a stronger proof of his tenderness and affection for Patroclus, than either the grief he expressed at his death, or the fury he shewed to revenge it.

v. 285. *Dodonæan Jove.*] The frequent mention of Oracles in Homer and the ancient authors, may make it not improper to give the reader a general account of so considerable a part of the Grecian superstition ; which I cannot do better than in the words of my friend Mr.



84 HOMER's ILIA D. Book XVI.

Who 'midst surrounding frosts, and vapours chill,  
Presid'st on bleak Dodona's vocal hill :

Stanyan, in his excellent and judicious abstract of the Grecian history.

" The Oracles were ranked among the noblest and most religious kinds of divination ; the design of them being to settle such an immediate way of converse with their Gods, as to be able by them not only to explain things intricate and obscure, but also to anticipate the knowledge of future events ; and that with far greater certainty than they could hope for from men, who out of ignorance and prejudice must sometimes either conceal or betray the truth. So that this became the only safe way of deliberating upon affairs of any consequence, either publick or private. Whether to proclaim war, or conclude a peace ; to institute a new form of government, or enact new laws ; all was to be done with the advice and approbation of the Oracle, whose determinations were always held sacred and inviolable. As to the causes of Oracles, Jupiter was looked upon as the first cause of this, and all other sorts of divination ; he had 'the book of fate before him, and out of that revealed either more or less, as he pleased, to inferiour dæmons. But to argue more rationally, this way of access to the Gods has been branded as one of the earliest and grossest pieces of priestcraft, that obtained in the world. For the priests, whose dependence was on the Oracles, when they found the cheat had got sufficient footing, allowed no man to consult the Gods without costly sacrifices and rich presents to themselves : and as few could bear this expence, it served to raise their credit among the common people by keeping them at an awful distance. And to heighten their esteem with the better and wealthier sort, even they were only admitted upon a few stated days : by which the thing appeared still



## Book XVI. . H O M E R's I L I A D. 35

(Whose groves, the Selli, race austere ! surround,  
Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the ground ;

“ more mysterious, and for want of this good management, must quickly have been seen through, and fallen to the ground. But whatever juggling there was as to the religious part, Oracles had certainly a good effect as to the publick ; being admirably suited to the genius of a people, who would join in the most desperate expedition, and admit of any change of government, when they understood by the Oracle it was the irresistible will of the Gods. This was the method Minos, Lycurgus, and all the famous law-givers took ; and indeed they found the people so entirely devoted to this part of religion, that it was generally the easiest, and sometimes the only way of winning them into a compliance. And then they took care to have them delivered in such ambiguous terms, as to admit of different constructions according to the exigency of the times : so that they were generally interpreted to the advantage of the state, unless sometimes there happened to be bribery or flattery in the case ; as when Demosthenes complained that the Pythia spoke as Philip would have her. The most numerous, and of the greatest repute, were the Oracles of Apollo, who, in subordination to Jupiter, was appointed to preside over, and inspire all sorts of prophets and diviners. And amongst these, the Delphian challenged the first place, not so much in respect of its antiquity, as its perspicuity and certainty ; insomuch that the answers of the Tripos came to be used proverbially, for clear and infallible truths. Here we must not omit the first Pythia or priestess of this famous Oracle, who uttered her responses in heroick verse. They found a secret charm in numbers, which made every thing look pompous and weighty. And hence it became the general practice of legislators and philosophers, to deli-



86 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Who hear, from rustling oaks, thy dark decrees ;  
And catch the fates, low-whisper'd in the breeze.)

" ver their laws and maxims in that dress : and scarce  
" any thing in those ages was writ of excellence or mo-  
" ment but in verse. This was the dawn of poetry,  
" which soon grew into repute ; and so long as it served  
" to such noble purposes as religion and government,  
" poets were highly honoured, and admitted into a share  
" of the administration. But by that time it arrived  
" to any perfection, they pursued more mean and servile  
" ends ; and as they prostituted their muse, and debased  
" the subject, they sunk proportionably in their esteem  
" and dignity. As to the history of Oracles, we find  
" them mentioned in the very infancy of Greece, and  
" it is as uncertain when they were finally extinct, as  
" when they began. For they often lost their prophetick  
" faculty for some time, and recovered it again. I  
" know it is a common opinion, that they were uni-  
" versally silenced upon our Saviour's appearance in the  
" world : and if the Devil had been permitted for so  
" many ages to delude mankind, it might probably  
" have been so. But we are assured from history, that  
" several of them continued till the reign of Julian the  
" Apostate, and were consulted by him : and therefore I  
" look upon the whole business as of human contrivance ;  
" an egregious impostor founded upon superstition, and  
" carried on by policy and interest, till the brighter  
" oracles of the holy scriptures dispelled these mists of  
" error and enthusiasm."

[v. 285. *Pelasgick, Dodonean Jove.*] Achilles invokes Jupiter with these particular appellations, and represents to him the services performed by these priests and prophets ; making these honours, paid in his own country, his claim for the protection of this Deity. Jupiter was looked upon as the first cause of all divination and



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 87

Hear, as of old ! Thou gav'st, at Thetis' pray'r, 292  
Glory to me, and to the Greeks despair.

oracles, from whence he had the appellation of οὐρανοφάτος, Il. viii. v. 250. of the original. The first oracle of Dodona was founded by the Pelasgi, the most ancient of all the inhabitants of Greece, which is confirmed by this verse of Hesiod, preserved by the scholiast on Sophocles's Trachin :

Δωδώνη. φυγόν τε Πελασγῶν ἔργανον ἔκεινον.

The oaks of this place were said to be endowed with voice, and prophetick spirit ; the priests who gave answers concealing themselves in these trees ; a practice which the pious frauds of succeeding ages have rendered not improbable.

v. 288. *Whose groves the Selli, race austere, &c.]* Homer seems to me to say clearly enough, that these priests lay on the ground and forbore the bath, to honour by these austeries the God they served : for he says, Καὶ μέντοις αὐτοῖσιν προσέδει, and this Καὶ can in my opinion only signify for you, that is to say, *to please you, and for your honour.* This example is remarkable, but I do not think it singular ; and the earliest antiquity may furnish us with the like of pagans, who by an austere life tried to please their Gods. Nevertheless I am obliged to say, that Strabo, who speaks at large of these Selli in his seventh book, has not taken this austerity of life for an effect of their devotion, but for a remain of the grossness of their ancestors ; who being barbarians, and straying from country to country, had no bed but the earth, and never used a bath. But it is no way unlikely that what was in the first Pelasgians (who founded this oracle) only custom and use, might be continued by these priests through devotion. How many things do we at this day see, which were in their original only ancient manners, and which are continued through zeal and a spirit of religion ? It is very probable



## 88 HOMER's ILIA D. Book XVI.

**Lo, to the dangers of the fighting field  
The best, the dearest of my friends, I yield :**

that these priests by this hard living had a mind to attract the admiration and confidence of a people who loved luxury and delicacy so much. I was willing to search into antiquity for the original of these Sellii, priests of Jupiter, but found nothing so ancient as Homer; Herodotus writes in his second book, that the oracle of Dodona was the ancientest in Greece, and that it was a long time the only one; but what he adds, that it was founded by an Ægyptian woman, who was the priestess of it, is contradicted by this passage of Homer, who shews that in the time of the Trojan war this temple was served by men called Sellii, and not by women. Strabo informs us of a curious ancient tradition, importing, that this temple was at first built in Thessaly; that from thence it was carried into Dodona; that several women who had placed their devotion there, followed it; and that in process of time the priestesses used to be chosen from among the descendants of those women. To return to these Sellii, Sophocles, who of all the Greek poets is he who has most imitated Homer, speaks in like manner of these priests in one of his plays, where Hercules says to his son Hillus;

“ I will declare to thee a new oracle, which perfectly agrees with this ancient one; I myself having entered into the sacred wood inhabited by the austere Sellii, who lie on the ground, writ this answer of the oak, which is consecrated to my father Jupiter, and which renders his oracles in all languages.” *Dacier.*

v. 288.] Homer in this verse uses a word which I think singular and remarkable, ὑποφῆται. I cannot believe that it was put simply for ωρεφῆται, but am persuaded that this term includes some particular sense, and shews some custom, but little known, which I would willingly discover. In the Scholia of Didymus there is this remark:



**Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 89

**Tho' still determin'd, to my ships confin'd ;** 296  
**Patroclus gone, I stay but half behind.**

-- They called those who served in the temple, and who  
“ explained the oracles rendered by the priests, *hypophets*,  
“ or *under-prophets*.” It is certain that there were in the  
temples servitors, or subaltern ministers, who for the  
sake of gain undertook to explain the oracles which were  
obscure. This custom seems very well established in the  
Ion of Euripides; where that young child (after having  
said that the priestess is seated on the tripod, and renders  
the oracles which Apollo dictates to her) addresses him-  
self to those who serve in the temple, and bids them go  
and wash in the Castalian fountain, to come again into  
the temple, and explain the oracles to those who should  
demand the explication of them. Homer therefore means  
to shew, that these Sellii were, in the temple of Dodona,  
those subaltern ministers that interpreted the oracles.  
But this, after all, does not appear to agree with the  
present passage: for, besides that the custom was not  
established in Homer's time, and that there is no footstep  
of it founded in that early age; these Sellii (of whom Ho-  
mer speaks) are not here ministers subordinate to others,  
they are plainly the chief priests. The explication of  
this word therefore must be elsewhere sought, and I  
shall offer my conjecture, which I ground upon the na-  
ture of this oracle of Dodona, which was very different  
from all the other oracles. In all other temples the  
priests delivered the oracles which they had received  
from their Gods, immediately: but in the temple of  
Dodona, Jupiter did not utter his oracles to his priests,  
but to his Sellii; he rendered them to the oaks, and the  
wonderful oaks rendered them to the priests, who de-  
clared them to those who consulted them: so these priests  
were not properly *ἀρρεφότας*, prophets, since they did not  
receive those answers from the mouth of their God im-



90 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Oh ! be his guard thy providential care,  
Confirm his heart, and string his arm to war :  
Press'd by his single force, let Hector see      305  
His fame in arms not owing all to me.  
But when the fleets are sav'd from foes and fire,  
Let him with conquest and renown retire ;  
Preserve his arms, preserve his social train,  
And safe return him to these eyes again !      305

Great Jove consents to half the chief's request,  
But Heav'n's eternal doom denies the rest ,  
To free the fleet was granted to his pray'r ;  
His safe return, the winds dispers'd in air.  
Back to his tent the stern Achilles flies,      310  
And waits the combat with impatient eyes.

Meanwhile the troops beneath Patroclus' care,  
Invade the Trojans, and commence the war.

mediately : but they were but ἄποφῆται, under-prophets, because they received them from the mouth of the oaks, if I may say so. The oaks, properly speaking, were the prophets, the first interpreters of Jupiter's oracles ; and the Selli were ἄποφῆται, under-prophets, because they pronounced what the oaks had said. Thus Homer, in one single word, includes a very curious piece of antiquity. *Dacier.*

v. 306. *Great Jove consents to half.] Virgil has finely imitated this in the eleventh Aeneid :*

“ Audiit, & voti Phœbus succedere partem  
“ Mente dedit ; partem volucres dispersit in auras.  
“ Sternet ut subitâ turbatam morte Camillam  
“ Annuit oranti ; reducem ut patria alta videret  
“ Non dedit, inque notos vocem vertere procellæ.”



## Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D. 91

As wasps, provok'd by children in their play,  
For from their mansions by the broad high-way,  
I. swarms the guiltless traveller engage, 316  
Whet all their stings, and call forth all their rage:  
All rise in arms, and with a gen'ral cry  
Affert their waxen domes, and buzzing progeny.

v. 314. *As wasps provok'd, &c.*] One may observe, that though Homer sometimes takes his similitudes from the meanest and smallest things in nature, yet he orders it so as by their appearance to signalize and give lustre to his greatest heroes. Here he likens a body of Myrmidons to a nest of wasps, not on account of their strength and bravery, but of their heat and resentment. Virgil has imitated these humble comparisons, as when he compares the builders of Carthage to bees. Homer has carried it a little farther in another place, where he compares the soldiers to flies, for their busy industry and perseverance about a dead body; not diminishing his heroes by the size of these small animals, but raising his comparisons from certain properties inherent in them, which deserve our observation. *Eustathius.*

This brings into my mind a pretty rural simile in Spenser, which is very much in the simplicity of the old father of poetry.

As gentle shepherd in sweet even-tide,  
When ruddy Phœbus 'gins to welke in west,  
High on a hill, his flock to viewen wide,  
Marks which do bite their hasty supper best;  
A cloud of cumb'rous gnats do him molest,  
All striving to infix their feeble stings,  
That from their noyance he no whit can rest,  
But with his clownish hand their tender wings  
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.



## 92 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Thus from the tents the fervent legion swarms, 320  
So loud their clamours, and so keen their arms,  
Their rising rage Patroclus' breath inspires,  
Who thus inflames them with heroick fires.

Oh warriours, part'ners of Achilles' praise !  
Be mindful of your deeds in ancient days : 325  
Your god-like master let your acts proclaim,  
And add new glories to his mighty name.  
Think, your Achilles sees you fight : be brave,  
And humble the proud monarch whom you save.

Joyful they heard, and kindling as he spoke, 330  
Flew to the fleet, involv'd in fire and smoke.  
From shore to shore the doubling shouts resound,  
The hollow ships return a deeper sound.  
The war stood still, and all around them gaz'd,  
When great Achilles' shining armour blaz'd : 335  
Troy saw, and thought the dread Achilles nigh,  
At once then see, they tremble, and they fly.

Then first thy spear, divine Patroclus ! flew,  
Where the war rag'd, and where the tumult grew.  
Close to the stern of that fam'd ship, which bore  
Unblest Protesilaus to Ilion's shore, 340  
The great Pœonian, bold Pyræchmes, stood ;  
(Who led his bands from Axius' winding flood)  
His shoulder-blade receives the fatal wound ; 344  
The groaning warriour pants upon the ground.  
His troops, that see their country's glory slain,  
Fly diverse, scatter'd o'er the distant plain.  
Patroclus' arm forbids the spreading fires,  
And from the half-burn'd ship proud Troy retires ;



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 93

Clear'd from the smoke the joyful navy lies: 350

"heaps on heaps the foe tumultuous flies;  
Triumphant Greece her rescu'd decks ascends,  
And loud acclaim the starry region rends.

So when thick clouds inwrap the mountain's head,  
O'er heav'n's expanse like one black cieling spread:

v. 354. *So when thick clouds, &c.]* All the commentators take this comparison in a sense different from that in which it is here translated. They suppose Jupiter is here described cleaving the air with a flash of lightning, and spreading a gleam of light over a high mountain, which a black cloud held buried in darkness. The application is made to Patroclus falling on the Trojans, and giving respite to the Greeks, who were plunged in obscurity. Eustathius gives this interpretation, but at the same time acknowledges it improper in this comparison to represent the extinction of the flames by the darting of lightning. This explanation is solely founded on the expression *εργον' εξέτα Ζεύς*, *fulgorator Jupiter*, which epithet is often applied when no such action is supposed. The most obvious signification of the words in this passage, gives a more natural and agreeable image, and admits of a juster application. The simile seems to be of Jupiter dispersing a black cloud which had covered a high mountain, whereby a beautiful prospect, which was before hid in darkness, suddenly appears. This is applicable to the present state of the Greeks, after Patroclus had extinguished the flames, which began to spread clouds of smoke over the fleet. It is Homer's design in his comparisons to apply them to the most obvious and sensible image of the thing to be illustrated; which his commentators too frequently endeavour to hide by moral and allegorical refinements; and thus injure the poet more, by attributing to him what does not belong to him, than by refusing him what is really his own.



94 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Sudden, the Thund'rer with a flashing ray, 366  
Bursts thro' the darkness, and lets down the day :  
The hills shine out, the rocks in prospect rise,  
And streams, and vales, and forests strike the eyes ;  
The smiling scene wide opens to the sight, 360  
And all th' unmeasur'd æther flames with light.

But Troy repuls'd, and scatter'd o'er the plains ;  
Forc'd from the navy, yet the fight maintains.  
Now ev'ry Greek some hostile hero flew,  
But still the foremost, bold Patroclus flew ; 365  
As Areilucus had turn'd him round,  
Sharp in his thigh he felt the piercing wound ;  
The brazen-pointed spear, with vigour thrown,  
The thigh transfix'd, and broke the brittle bone :  
Headlong he fell. Next Thoas was thy chance, 370  
Thy breast, unarm'd, receiv'd the Spartan lance.  
Phylides' dart (as Amphiclus drew nigh)  
His blow prevented, and transpierc'd his thigh,  
Tore all the brawn, and rent the nerves away ;  
In darkness, and in death, the warriour lay. 375

It is much the same image with that of Milton in his second book, though applied in a very different way.

As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread  
Heav'n's cheerful face ; the low'ring element  
Scowl's o'er the darken'd landscape now or show'r ;  
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
The birds their notes renew, the bleating herds  
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 95

In equal arms two sons of Nestor stand,  
And two bold brothers of the Lycian band :  
By great Antilochus, Atymnius dies,  
Perc'd in the flank, lamented youth ! he lies.  
Kind Maris, bleeding in his brother's wound, 380  
Defends the breathless carcase on the ground.  
Furious he flies, his murd'rer to engage :  
But god-like Thrasimed prevents his rage,  
Between his arm and shoulder aims a blow ;  
His arm falls spouting on the dust below : 385  
He sinks, with endless darkness cover'd o'er ;  
And vents his soul, effus'd with gushing gore.

Slain by two brothers, thus two brothers bleed,  
Sarpedon's friends, Amisodarus' seed ;  
Amisodarus, who, by Furies led, 390  
The bane of men, abhorr'd Chimæra bred ;  
Skill'd in the dart in vain, his sons expire,  
And pay the forfeit of their guilty fire.

Stopp'd in the tumult Cleobulus lies,  
Beneath Oileus' arm, a living prize ; 395  
A living prize not long the Trojan stood ;  
The thirsty falchion drank his reeking blood :

v. 390. *Amisodarus, who, &c.*] Amisodarus was king of Caria ; Bellerophon married his daughter. The ancients guessed from this passage that the Chimæra was not a fiction, since Homer marks the time wherein she lived, and the prince with whom she lived ; they thought it was some beast of that prince's herds, who being grown furious and mad, had done a great deal of mischief, like the Calydonian boar. *Eustathius.*



96 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Plung'd in his throat the smoking weapon lies ;  
Black death, and fate unpitying, seal his eyes.

Amid the ranks, with mutual thirst of fame,  
Lycon the brave, and fierce Peneleus came ; 401  
In vain their jav'lins at each other flew,  
Now, met in arms, their eager swords they drew.  
On the plum'd crest of his Bœotian foe,  
The daring Lycon aim'd a noble blow ; 405  
The sword broke short : but his, Peneleus sped  
Full on the juncture of the neck and head :  
The head, divided by a stroke so just,  
Hung by the skin : the body sunk to dust.

O'er taken Neamas by Merion bleeds, 410  
Pierc'd thro' the shoulder as he mounts his steeds,  
Back from the car he tumbles to the ground :  
His swimming eyes eternal shades surround.

Next Erymas was doom'd his fate to feel,  
His open'd mouth receiv'd the Cretan steel : 415  
Beneath the brain the point a passage tore,  
Crash'd the thin bones, and drown'd the teeth in  
gore :

His mouth, his eyes, his nostrils pour a flood ;  
He sobs his soul out in the gush of blood.

As when the flocks neglected by the swain 420  
(Or kids, or lambs) lie scatter'd o'er the plain,  
A troop of wolves th' unguarded charge survey,  
And rend the trembling, unresisting prey :  
Thus on the foe the Greeks impetuous came ;  
Troy fled, unmindful of her former fame. 425



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 97

But still at Hector god-like Ajax aim'd,  
Still, pointed at his breast, his jav'lin flam'd :  
The Trojan chief, experienc'd in the field,  
Over his broad shoulders spread the massy shield,  
Observ'd the storm of darts the Grecians pour, 430  
And on his buckler caught the ringing show'r.  
He sees for Greece the scale of conquest rise,  
Yet stops, and turns, and saves his lov'd allies.

As when the hand of Jove a tempest forms,  
And rolls the cloud to blacken heav'n with storms,  
Dark o'er the fields th' ascending vapour flies, 436  
And shades the sun, and blots the golden skies :  
So from the ships, along the dusky plain,  
Dire Flight and Terrour drove the Trojan train.  
Ev'n Hector fled ; thro' heaps of disarray 440  
The fiery coursers forc'd their lord away :  
While far behind his Trojans fall confus'd,  
Wedg'd in the trench, in one vast carnage bruis'd :  
Chariots on chariots roll ; the clashing spokes  
Shock ; while the madding steeds break short their  
yokes : 445

v. 433. *Yet stops, and turns, and saves his lov'd allies.*] Homer represents Hector, as he retires, making a stand from time to time, to save his troops : and he expresses it by this single word ἀρέμενος, for ἀρέμενος does not only signify to stay, but likewise in retiring to stop from time to time ; for this is the power of the preposition ἀπό, as in the word ἀπαγέρεσθαι, which signifies to fight by fits and starts ; ἀναλαίεσθαι, to wrestle several times, and in many others. Eustathius.



98 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

In vain they labour up the steepy mound ;  
Their charioteers lie foaming on the ground.  
Fierce on the rear, with shouts, Patroclus flies ;  
Tumultuous clamour fills the fields and skies.  
Thick drifts of dust involve their rapid flight ; 450  
Clouds rise on clouds, and heav'n is snatch'd from  
sight.

Th' affrighted steeds, their dying lords cast down,  
Scour o'er the fields, and stretch to reach the  
town.

Loud o'er the rout was heard the victor's cry, 454  
Where the war bleeds, and where the thickest die,  
Where horse and arms, and chariots lie o'erthrown,  
And bleeding heroes under axles groan.

No stop, no check the steeds of Peleus knew ;  
From bank to bank th' immortal coursers flew,  
High-bounding o'er the fosse : the whirling car 460  
Smokes thro' the ranks, o'er takes the flying war,  
And thunders after Hector ; Hector flies,  
Patroclus shakes his lance ; but Fate denies.  
Not with less noise, with less impetuous force,  
The tide of Trojans urge their desp'rate course, 465

v. 459. *From bank to bank th' immortal coursers flew, &c.]*  
Homer had made of Hector's horses all that poetry could  
make of common and mortal horses ; they stand on the  
bank of the ditch, foaming and neighing for madness  
that they cannot leap it. But the immortal horses of  
Achilles find no obstacle ; they leap the ditch, and fly  
into the plain. *Exstasis.*



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 99

'Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours,  
And earth is loaden with incessant show'rs,  
When guilty mortals break th' eternal laws,  
(judges brib'd, betray the righteous cause)

v. 466. *Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours—  
When guilty mortals, &c.]*

The poet in this image of an inundation, takes occasion to mention a sentiment of great piety, that such calamities were the effects of divine justice punishing the sins of mankind. This might probably refer to the tradition of an universal deluge, which was very common among the ancient heathen writers; most of them ascribing the cause of this deluge to the wrath of Heaven provoked by the wickedness of men. Diodorus Siculus, lib. xv. cap. 5. speaking of an earthquake and inundation, which destroyed a great part of Greece, in the hundred and first Olympiad, has these words. *There was a great dispute concerning the cause of this calamity: the natural philosophers generally ascribed such events to necessary causes, not to any divine hand: but they who had more devout sentiments, gave a more probable account hereof; asserting, that it was the divine vengeance alone that brought this destruction upon men who had offended the Gods with their impiety.* And then proceeds to give an account of those crimes which drew down this punishment upon them.

This is one, among a thousand instances, of Homer's indirect and oblique manner of introducing moral sentences and instructions. These agreeably break in upon his reader even in descriptions and poetical parts, where one naturally expects only painting and amusement. We have virtue put upon us by surprise, and are pleased to find a thing where we should never have looked to meet with it. I must do a noble English poet the justice to observe, that it is this particular art that is the very dis-



## 100 HOMER'S ILIA D. Book XVI.

From their deep beds he bids the rivers rise, 470  
And opens all the flood-gates of the skies :  
Th' impetuous torrents from their hills obey,  
Whole fields are drown'd, and mountains  
away ;

Loud roars the deluge 'till it meets the main ;  
And trembling man sees all his labours vain. 475

And now the chief (the foremost troops repell'd)  
Back to the ships his destin'd progress held,  
Bore down half Troy in his resistless way,  
And forc'd the routed ranks to stand the day.  
Between the space where silver Simois flows, 480  
Where lay the fleets, and where the rampires rose,

tinguishing excellence of Cooper's-Hill ; throughout which, the descriptions of places, and images raised by the poet, are still tending to some hint, or leading into some reflection, upon moral life or political institution : much in the same manner as the real sight of such scenes and prospects is apt to give the mind a composed turn, and incline it to thoughts and contemplations that have a relation to the object.

v. 480. *Between the space where silver Simois flows,  
Where lay the fleets, and where the rampires rose.]*

It looks at first sight as if Patroclus was very punctual in obeying the orders of Achilles, when he hinders the Trojans from ascending to their town, and holds an engagement with them between the ships, the river, and the wall. But he seems afterwards through very haste to have slipped his commands ; for his orders were that he should drive them from the ships, and then presently return ; but he proceeds farther, and his death is the consequence. *Eustathius.*



**Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D. 101**

All grim in dust and blood, Patroclus stands,  
And turns the slaughter on the conqu'ring bands.  
First Pronous dy'd beneath his fiery dart,  
Wh<sup>ch</sup> pierc'd below the shield his valiant heart.  
Thestor was next ; who saw the chief appear, 486  
And fell the victim of his coward fear ;  
Shrunk up he sat, with wild and haggard eye,  
Nor stood to combat, nor had force to fly :  
Patroclus mark'd him as he shunn'd the war, 490  
And with unmanly tremblings shook the car,  
And dropp'd the flowing reins. Him 'twixt the  
jaws

The jav'lin sticks, and from the chariot draws.  
As on a rock that over-hangs the main,  
An angler, studious of the line and cane, 495  
Some mighty fish draws panting to the shore ;  
Not with less ease the barbed jav'lin bore  
The gaping dasard : as the spear was shook,  
He fell, and life his heartless breast forsook.

Next on Eryalus he flies ; a stone 500  
Large as a rock, was by his fury thrown :  
Full on his crown the pond'rous fragment flew,  
And burst the helm, and cleft the head in two :  
Prone to the ground the breathless warriour fell,  
And death involv'd him with the shades of hel'.  
Then low in dust Epaltes, Echius lie ; 506  
Ipheas, Evippus, Polymelus, die ;  
Amphoterus, and Erymas succeed ;  
And last Tlepolemus and Pyres bled.



192 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Where'er he moves, the growing slaughters spread  
In heaps on heaps ; a monument of dead. 511

When now Sarpedon his brave friends beheld  
Grov'ling in dust, and gasping on the field,

v. 512. *When now Sarpedon, &c.]* The poet preparing to recount the death of Sarpedon, it will not be improper to give a sketch of some particulars which constitute a character the most faultless and amiable in the whole Iliad. This hero is by birth superior to all the chiefs of either side, being the only son of Jupiter engaged in this war. His qualities are no way unworthy his descent, since he every where appears equal in valour, prudence, and eloquence, to the most admired heroes : nor are these excellencies blemished with any of those defects with which the most distinguishing characters of the poem are stained. So that the nicest criticks cannot find any thing to offend their delicacy, but must be obliged to own the manners of this hero perfect. His valour is neither rash nor boisterous ; his prudence neither timorous nor tricking ; and his eloquence neither talkative nor boasting. He never reproaches the living, or insults the dead : but appears uniform through his conduct in the war, acted with the same generous sentiments that engaged him in it, having no interest in the quarrel but to succour his allies in distress. This noble life is ended with a death as glorious ; for in his last moments he has no other concern, but for the honour of his friends, and the event of the day.

Homer justly represents such a character to be attended with universal esteem : as he was greatly honoured when living, he is as much lamented when dead, as the chief prop of Troy. The poet by his death, even before that of Hector, prepares us to expect the destruction of that town, when its two great defenders are no more : and in order to make it the more signal and remarkable, it is the only death of the Iliad attended with prodigies : even his



## Book XVI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 103

With this reproach his flying host he warms,  
Oh stain to honour ! oh disgrace to arms ! 515  
Forsake, inglorious, the contended plain :  
hand, unaided, shall the war sustain :  
The task be mine, this hero's strength to try,  
Who mows whole troops, and makes an army fly.  
He spake ; and speaking, leaps from off the car ; 520  
Patroclus lights, and sternly waits the war.  
As when two vultures on the mountains height  
Stoop with resounding pinions to the fight :

funeral is performed by divine assistance, he being the only hero whose body is carried back to be interred in his native country, and honoured with monuments erected to his fame. These peculiar and distinguishing honours seem appropriated by our author to him alone, as the reward of a merit superior to all his other less perfect heroes.

v. 522. *As when two vultures.*] Homer compares Patroclus and Sarpedon to two vultures, because they appeared to be of equal strength and abilities, when they had dismounted from their chariots. For this reason he has chosen to compare them to birds of the same kind ; as on another occasion, to image the like equality of strength, he resembles both Hector and Patroclus to lions ; but a little after this place, diminishing the force of Sarpedon, he compares him to a bull, and Patroclus to a lion. He has placed these vultures upon a high rock, because it is their nature to perch there, rather than on the boughs of trees. Their crooked talons make them unfit to walk on the ground, they could not fight steadily in the air, and therefore their fittest place is the rock.  
*Eustathius.*



204 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

They cuff, they tear, they raise a screaming cry :  
The desert echoes, and the rocks reply : 525  
The warriours thus oppos'd in arms, engage  
With equal clamours, and with equal rage. .

Jove view'd the combat ; whose event foreseen,  
He thus bespoke his Sister and his Queen.  
The hour draws on ; the Destinies ordain, 530  
My god-like son shall press the Phrygian plain :  
Already on the verge of death he stands,  
His life is ow'd to fierce Patroclus' hands.  
What passions in a parent's breast debate !  
Say, shall I snatch him from impending fate, 535

v. 535. *Say, shall I snatch him from impending fate.*] It appears by this passage, that Homer was of opinion, that the power of God could over-rule fate or destiny. It has puzzled many to distinguish exactly the notions of the heathens as to this point. Mr. Dryden contends that Jupiter was limited by the Destinies, or (to use his expression) was no better than book-keeper to them. He grounds it upon a passage in the tenth book of Virgil, where Jupiter mentions this instance of Sarpedon as a proof of his yielding to the Fates. But both that, and his citation from Ovid, amounts to no more than that Jupiter gave way to Destiny ; not that he could not prevent it ; the contrary to which is plain from his doubt and deliberation in this place. And indeed whatever may be inferred of other poets, Homer's opinion at least, as to the dispensations of God to man, has ever seemed to me very clear, and distinctly agreeable to truth. We shall find, if we examine his whole works with an eye to this doctrine, that he assigns three causes of all the good and evil that happens in this world, which he takes a particular care to distinguish. First the *will of God*, superior to all.



**Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 105**

And send him safe to Lycia, distant far  
 From all the dangers and the toils of war ;  
 Or to his doom my bravest offspring yield,  
 And fatten with celestial blood, the field ?      539

Then thus the Goddefs with the radiant eyes :  
 What words are these ? O sov'reign of the skies !  
 Short is the date prescrib'd to mortal man ;  
 Shall Jove, for one, extend the narrow span,  
 Whose bounds were fix'd before his race began ? }  
 How many sons of Gods, foredoom'd to death,  
 Before proud Ilion, must resign their breath !      546

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βελή. Il. i.

Θεὸς διὰ πάντα τελευτᾶ. Il. xix. v. 90.

Ζεὺς ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε δίδοι,—&c.

Secondly *destiny* or *fate*, meaning the laws and order of nature affecting the constitutions of men, and disposing them to good or evil, prosperity or misfortune ; which the Supreme Being, if it be his pleasure, may over-rule (as he is inclined to do in this place) but which he generally suffers to take effect. Thirdly, our own *free will*, which either by prudence overcomes those natural influences and passions, or by folly suffers us to fall under them. Odyss. i. v. 32.

\*Ω πόποι, οὐτοὶ δὲ π Θεὸς βροτοὶ ἀπιθανται.

\*Εξ ἡμέων γὰρ φασι κακὸν ἔμφεναι. οἱ δὲ τῷ αὐτῷ  
 Σφῆσσιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὑπὲξ μόρος ἀλγεῖς ἔχεσσιν.

**Why charge mankind on Heav'n their own offence,  
 And call their woes the crime of Providence ?  
 Blind ! who themselves their miseries create,  
 And perish by their folly, not their fate.**



306 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Were thine exempt,' debate would rise above,  
And murmur'ring Pow'rs condemn their partial Jove.  
Give the bold chief a glorious fate in fight ;  
And when th' ascending soul has wing'd her flight,

550

Let Sleep and Death convey, by thy command,  
The breathless body to his native land.  
His friends and people, to his future praise,  
A marble tomb and pyramid shall raise,  
And lasting honours to his ashes give ; 555  
His fame ('tis all the dead can have) shall live.

She said ; the Cloud-compeller overcome,  
Assents to fate, and ratifies the doom.

v. 551. *Let Sleep and Death convey, by thy command,  
The breathless body to his native land.]*

The history or fable received in Homer's time, imports that Sarpedon was interred in Lycia, but it said nothing of his death. This gave the poet the liberty of making him die at Troy, provided that after his death he was carried into Lycia, to preserve the fable. The expedient proposed by Juno solves all; Sarpedon dies at Troy, and is interred at Lycia; and what renders this probable is, that in those times, as at this day, princes and persons of quality who died in foreign parts were carried into their own country to be laid in the tomb with their fathers. The antiquity of this custom cannot be doubted, since it was practised in the patriarchs times : Jacob dying in Egypt, orders his children to carry him into the land of Canaan, where he desired to be buried. Gen. xlix. 29. Dacier.



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 107

Then, touch'd with grief, the weeping heav'ns distill'd  
A show'r of blood o'er all the fatal field ; 560  
The God, his eyes averting from the plain,  
Foretells his son, predestin'd to be slain,  
Far from the Lycian shores, his happy native reign. }

Now met in arms, the combatants appear,  
Each heav'd the shield, and pois'd the lifted spear :  
From strong Patroclus' hand the jav'lin fled, 566  
And pass'd the groin of valiant Thrasymed ;  
The nerves unbrac'd, no more his bulk sustain,  
He falls, and falling bites the bloody plain.  
Two sounding darts the Lycian leader threw ; 570  
The first aloof with erring fury flew,  
The next transpierc'd Achilles' mortal steed,  
The gen'rous Pegasus of Theban breed,

v. 560. *A show'r of blood.*] As to showers of a bloody colour, many both ancient and modern naturalists agree in asserting the reality of such appearances, though they account for them differently. You may see a very odd solution of them in Eustathius, note on v. 53, corresponding to v. 70, in the translation of the eleventh Iliad. What seems the most probable, is that of Fromondus in his Meteorology, who observed, that a shower of this kind, which gave great cause of wonder, was nothing but a quantity of very small red insects, beat down to the earth by a heavy shower, whereby the ground was spotted in several places, as with drops of blood.

v. 572. —— Achilles' mortal steed,  
*The gen'rous Pegasus —— ]*

For the other two horses of Achilles, Xanthus, and Balius were immortal, as we have already seen in this book.



## 108 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

Fix'd in the shoulder's joint ; he reel'd around,  
Roll'd in the bloody dust, and paw'd the slipp'ry  
ground. 575

His sudden fall th' entangled harness broke ;  
Each axle crackled, and the chariot shook :  
When bold Automedon to disengage  
The starting coursers, and restrain their rage,  
Divides the traces with his sword, and freed 580  
Th' incumber'd chariot from the dying steed :  
The rest move on, obedient to the rein ;  
The car rolls slowly o'er the dusty plain.

The tow'ring chiefs to fiercer fight advance,  
And first Sarpedon whirl'd his weighty lance, 585  
Which o'er the warriour's shoulder took its course,  
And spent in empty air its dying force.  
Not so Patroclus' never-erring dart ;  
Aim'd at his breast, it pierc'd the mortal part,  
Where the strong fibres bind the solid heart. 590 }  
Then, as the mountain oak, or poplar tall,  
Or pine (fit mast for some great admiral)  
Nods to the ax, 'till with a groaning sound  
It sinks, and spreads its honours on the ground :  
Thus fell the king ; and laid on earth supine, 595  
Before his chariot stretch'd his form divine :  
He grasp'd the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And pale in death, lay groaning on the shore.

It is a merry conceit of Eustathius, that Pedaſus is only said to be mortal, because of three horses he only was a gelding. It is pity poor Pedaſus had not a better fate to have recompensed the loss of his iminortality.



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 109

So lies a bull beneath the lion's paws, 599  
While the grim savage grinds with foamy jaws  
The trembling limbs, and sucks the smoking blood ;  
Feeble groans, and hollow roars, rebeelow thro' the  
wood.

Then to the leader of the Lycian band  
The dying chief address'd his last command.  
Glaucus, be bold ; thy task be first to dare 605  
The glorious dangers of destructive war,  
To lead my troops, to combat at their head,  
Incite the living, and supply the dead.  
Tell 'em, I charg'd them with my latest breath  
Not unreveng'd to bear Sarpedon's death. 610

v. 605. *Glaucus, be bold, &c.]* This dying speech of Sarpedon deserves particular notice, being made up of noble sentiments, and fully answering the character of this brave and generous prince, which he preserves in his last moments. Being sensible of approaching death, without any transports of rage, or desire of revenge, he calls to his friend to take care to preserve his body and arms from becoming a prey to the enemy ; and this he says without any regard to himself, but out of the most tender concern for his friend's reputation, who must for ever become infamous, if he fails in this point of honour and duty. If we conceive this said by the expiring hero, his dying looks fixed on his wounded disconsolate friend, the spear remaining in his body, and the victor standing by in a kind of extasy surveying his conquest ; these circumstances will form a very moving picture. Patroclus all this time, either out of humanity or surprise, omits to pull out the spear, which however he does not long forbear, but with it drawing forth his vitals, puts a period to this gallant life.



## MR HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

What grief, what shame must Glaucus undergo,  
If these spoil'd arms adorn a Grecian foe ?  
Then as a friend, and as a warriour, fight ;  
Defend my body, conquer in my right ;  
That taught by great examples, all may try      615  
Like thee to vanquish, or like me to die.

He ceas'd ; the Fates suppress'd his lab'ring breath,  
And his eyes darken'd with the shades of death.  
Th' insulting vi<sup>t</sup>or with disdain bestrode  
The prostrate prince, and on his bosom trod ;      620  
Then drew the weapon from his panting heart,  
The reeking fibres clinging to the dart ;  
From the wide wound gush'd out a stream of blood,  
And the soul issu'd in the purple flood.  
His flying steeds the Myrmidons detain,      625  
Unguided now, their mighty master slain.  
All-impotent of aid, transfix'd with grief,  
Unhappy Glaucus heard the dying chief.  
His painful arm, yet useless with the smart  
Inflicted late by Teucer's deadly dart,      630  
Supported on his better hand he stay'd ;  
To Phœbus then ('twas all he could) he pray'd.

All-seeing Monarch ! whether Lycia's coast,  
Or sacred Ilion, thy bright presence boast,  
Pow'rful alike to ease the wretch's smart ;      635  
Oh hear me ! God of ev'ry healing art !  
Lo ! stiff with clotted blood, and pierc'd with pain,  
That thrills my arm, and shoots thro' ev'ry vein ;

v. 637. — — — — Pierc'd with pain,  
That thrills my arm, and shoots thro' ev'ry vein.]



**Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD.** 111

I stand unable to sustain the spear,  
And sigh, at distance from the glorious war. 640  
**Low in the dust is great Sarpedon laid,**  
**Nor Jove vouchsaf'd his hapless offspring aid.**  
**But thou, O God of Health! thy succour lend,**  
**To guard the reliques of my slaughter'd friend.**  
**For thou, tho' distant, canst restore my might,** 645  
**To head my Lycians, and support the fight.**

Apollo heard ; and suppliant as he stood,  
**His heav'nly hand restrain'd the flux of blood :**  
**He drew the dolours from the wounded part,**  
**And breath'd a spirit in his rising heart.** 650  
**Renew'd by art divine, the hero stands,**  
**And owns th' assistance of immortal hands.**  
**First to the fight his native troops he warms,**  
**Then loudly calls on Troy's vindictive arms ;**  
**With ample strides he stalks from place to place ;**  
**Now fires Agenor, now Polydamas ;** 655  
**Aeneas next, and Hector he accosts ;**  
**Inflaming thus the rage of all their hosts.**

There seems to be an oversight in this place. Glaucus in the twelfth book had been wounded with an arrow by Teucer at the attack of the wall ; and here so long after, we find him still on the field, *in the sharpest anguish of his wound, the blood not being yet stanch'd, &c.* In the speech that next follows to Hector, there is also something liable to censure, when he imputes to the negligence of the Trojans the death of Sarpedon, of which they knew nothing till that very speech informed them. I beg leave to pass over these things without exposing or defending them ; though such as these may be sufficient grounds for a most inveterate war among the criticks.



112 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

What thoughts, regardless chief ! thy breast employ ?

Oh too forgetful of the friends of Troy ! 660  
Those gen'rous friends, who, from their country far,

Breathe their brave souls out in another's war.  
See ! where in dust the great Sarpedon lies,  
In action valiant, and in council wise, 664  
Who guarded right, and kept his people free ;  
To all his Lycians lost, and lost to thee !  
Stretch'd by Patroclus' arm on yonder plains,  
Oh save from hostile rage his lov'd remains :  
Ah let not Greece his conquer'd trophies boast,  
Nor on his corse revenge her heroes lost. 670

He spoke ; each leader in his grief partook,  
Troy, at the loss, thro' all her legions shook.  
Transfix'd with deep regret, they view o'erthrown  
At once his country's pillar, and their own ;  
A chief, who led to Troy's beleaguer'd wall 675  
A host of heroes, and out-shin'd them all.  
Fir'd they rush on ; first Hector seeks the foes,  
And with superiour vengeance greatly glows.

But o'er the dead the fierce Patroclus stands,  
And rousing Ajax, rous'd the list'ning bands. 680

Heroes, be men ! be what you were before ;  
Or weigh the great occasion, and be more.  
The chief who taught our lofty walls to yield,  
Lies pale in death, extended on the field.  
To guard his body Troy in numbers flies ; 685  
'Tis half the glory to maintain our prize.



**Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 113**

**Haste, strip his arms, the slaughter round him spread,**

**And send the living Lycians to the dead.**

The heroes kindle at his fierce command ;  
The martial squadrons close on either hand : 690  
**Here Troy and Lycia charge with loud alarms,**  
**Thessalia there, and Greece, oppose their arms.**  
With horrid shouts they circle round the slain ;  
The clash of armour rings o'er all the plain.  
**Great Jove, to swell the horrors of the fight, 695**  
**O'er the fierce armies pours pernicious night.**  
**And round his son confounds the warring hosts,**  
**His fate ennobling with a croud of ghosts.**

Now Greece gives way, and great Epigeus falls ;  
**Agacleus' son, from Budium's lofty walls : 700**  
Who chas'd for murder thence, a suppliant came  
To Peleus, and the silver-footed dame ;  
Now sent to Troy, Achilles' arms to aid,  
He pays due vengeance to his kinsman's shade.  
Soon as his luckless hand had touch'd the dead, 705  
**A rock's large fragment thunder'd on his head ;**

v. 695. *Great Jove—O'er the fierce armies pours pernicious night.]* Homer calls here by the name of night, the whirlwinds of thick dust which rise from beneath the feet of the combatants, and which hinder them from knowing one another. Thus poetry knows how to convert the most natural things into miracles ; these two armies are buried in dust round Sarpedon's body ; it is Jupiter who pours upon them an obscure night, to make the battle bloodier, and to honour the funeral of his son by a greater number of victims. *Eustathius.*



## 324 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Hurl'd by Hectorean force, it cleft in twain  
His shatter'd helm, and stretch'd him o'er the slain.

Fierce to the van of fight Patroclus came ;  
And, like an eagle darting at his game, 710  
Sprung on the Trojan and the Lycian band ;  
What grief thy heart, what fury urg'd thy hand,  
Oh gen'rous Greek ! when with full vigour thrown  
At Sthenelaüs flew the weighty stone,  
Which sunk him to the dead : when Troy, too  
near 715

That arm, drew back ; and Hector learn'd to fear.  
Far as an able hand a lance can throw,  
Or at the lists, or at the fighting foe ;  
So far the Trojans from their lines retir'd ;  
'Till Glaucus turning, all the rest inspir'd. 720  
Then Bathyclæus fell beneath his rage,  
The only hope of Chalcon's trembling age :  
Wide o'er the land was stretch'd his large domain,  
With stately seats, and riches, blest in vain :  
Him, bold with youth, and eager to pursue 725  
The flying Lycians, Glaucus met, and flew ;  
Pierc'd thro' the bosom with a sudden wound,  
He fell, and falling, made the fields resound.  
Th' Achaians sorrow for their hero slain ;  
With conqu'ring shouts the Trojans shake the  
plain, 730

And croud to spoil the dead : the Greeks oppose ;  
An iron circle round the carcase grows.

Then brave Laogonus resign'd his breath,  
Dispatch'd by Meion to the shades of death :



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD.

115

On Ida's holy hill he made abode,  
The priest of Jove, and honour'd like his God.  
Between the jaw and ear the jav'lin went ;  
The soul, exhaling, issu'd at the vent.

735

His spear Æneas at the victor threw,  
Who stooping forward from the death withdrew ;  
The lance hiss'd harmless o'er his cov'ring shield,  
And trembling struck, and rooted in the field ;  
There yet scarce spent, it quivers on the plain,  
Sent by the great Æneas' arm in vain.

Swift as thou art (the raging hero cries) 740  
And skill'd in dancing to dispute the prize,  
My spear, the destin'd passage had it found,  
Had fix'd thy active vigour to the ground.

745

Oh valiant leader of the Dardan host !  
(Insulted Merion thus retorts the boast) 750  
Strong as you are, 'tis mortal force you trust,  
An arm as strong may stretch thee in the dust.  
And if to this my lance thy fate be giv'n,  
Vain are thy vaunts ; success is still from heav'n :  
This, instant, sends thee down to Pluto's coast ;  
Mine is the glory, his thy parting ghost. 756

O friend (Menœtius' son this answer gave)  
With words to combat, ill befits the brave ;

v. 746. *And skill'd in dancing.*] This stroke of raillery upon Meriones is founded on the custom of his country. For the Cretans were peculiarly addicted to this exercise, and in particular are said to have invented the Pyrrhic dance, which was performed in complete armour. See note on v. 797, in the thirteenth book.



116 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIV.

Not empty boasts the sons of Troy repell,  
Your swords must plunge them to the shades of hell.  
To speak, beseems the council ; but to dare      761  
In glorious action, is the task of war.

This said, Patroclus to the battle flies ;  
Great Merion follows, and new shouts arise :  
Shields, helmets rattle, as the warriours close ;    765  
And thick and heavy sounds the storm of blows.  
As thro' the shrilling vale, or mountain ground,  
The labours of the woodman's ax resound ;  
Blows following blows are heard re-echoing wide,  
While crackling forests fall on ev'ry side.      77•  
Thus echo'd all the fields with loud alarms,  
So fell the warriours, and so rung their arms.

Now great Sarpedon on the sandy shore,  
. His heav'nly form defac'd with dust and gore,  
And stuck with darts by warring heroes shed,    775  
Lies undistinguish'd from the vulgar dead.  
His long-disputed corse the chiefs inclose,  
On ev'ry side the busy combat grows ;  
Thick as beneath some shepherd's thatch'd abode,  
(The pails high foaming with a milky flood,)    78•  
The buzzing flies, a persevering train,  
Incessant swarm, and chas'd return again.

Jove view'd the combat with a stern survey,  
And eyes that flash'd intolerable day.  
Fix'd on the field his sight, his breast debates    785  
The vengeance due, and meditates the fates :  
Whether to urge their prompt effect, and call  
The force of Hector to Patroclus' fall,



Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 117

This instant see his short-liv'd trophies won,  
And stretch him breathless on his slaughter'd son ;  
Or yet, with many a soul's untimely flight, 791  
Augment the fame and horrour of the fight.

To crown Achilles' valiant friend with praise  
At length he dooms ; and that his last of days  
Shall set in glory ; bids him drive the foe ; 795  
Nor unattended, see the shades below.

Then Hector's mind he fills with dire dismay ;  
He mounts his car, and calls his hosts away,  
Sunk with Troy's heavy fates, he sees decline  
The scales of Jove, and pants with awe divine. -800

Then, nor before, the hardy Lycians fled,  
And left their monarch with the common dead :  
Around, in heaps on heaps, a dreadful wall  
Of carnage rises, as the heroes fall. 804

(So Jove decreed !) At length the Greeks obtain  
The prize contested, and despoil the slain.  
The radiant arms are by Patroclus borne,  
Patroclus' ships the glorious spoils adorn.

Then thus to Phœbus, in the realms above,  
Spoke from his throne the cloud-compelling Jove.  
Descend, my Phœbus ! on the Phrygian plain, 811  
And from the fight convey Sarpedon slain ;  
Then bathe his body in the chrystral flood ;  
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with blood :  
O'er all his limbs ambrosial odours shed, 815  
And with celestial robes adorn the dead.  
Those rites discharg'd, his sacred corse bequeath  
To the soft arms of silent Sleep and Death.



128 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

They to his friends the mournful charge shall bear,  
His friends a tomb and pyramid shall rear ; 820  
What honours mortals after death receive,  
Those unavailing honours we may give !

Apollo bows, and from mount Ida's height,  
Swift to the field precipitates his flight ;  
Thence from the war the breathless hero bore, 825  
Veil'd in a cloud, to silver Simoës' shore ;  
There bath'd his honourable wounds, and dreft  
His manly members in th' immortal vest ;  
And with perfumes of sweet ambrofial dews,  
Restores his freshness, and his form renews. 830  
Then Sleep and Death, two twins of winged race,  
Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,

v. 831. *Then Sleep and Death, &c.]* It is the notion of Eustathius, that by this interment of Sarpedon, where Sleep and Death are concerned, Homer seems to intimate, that there was nothing else but an empty monument of that hero in Lycia; for he delivers him not to any real or solid persons, but to certain unsubstantial phantoms to conduct his body thither. He was forced, continues my author, to make use of these machines, since there were no other deities he could with any likelihood employ about this work; for the ancients (as appears from Euripides's Hippolytus) had a superstition that all dead bodies were offensive to the Gods, they being of a nature celestial and uncorruptible. But this last remark is impertinent, since we see in this very place Apollo is employed in adorning and embalming the body of Sarpedon.

What I think better accounts for the passage, is what Philostratus in Heroicus affirms, that this alludes to a piece of antiquity. "The Lycians shewed the body of Sarpedon, strewed over with aromatical spices, in such



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 119

Receiv'd Sarpedon, at the God's command,  
And in a moment reach'd the Lycian land ;  
The corse amidst his weeping friends they laid, 835  
Where endless honours wait the sacred shade.

Meanwhile Patroclus pours along the plains,  
With foaming coursers, and with loosen'd reins.  
Fierce on the Trojan and the Lycian crew,  
Ah blind to fate ! thy headlong fury flew : 840  
Against what Fate and pow'rful Jove ordain,  
Vain was thy friend's command, thy courage vain.  
For he, the God, whose counsels uncontroll'd,  
Dismay the mighty, and confound the bold :  
The God who gives, resumes, and orders all, 845  
He urg'd thee on, and urg'd thee on to fall.

Who first, brave hero ! by that arm was slain,  
Who last, beneath thy vengeance press'd the plain ;

" a graceful..composure, that he seemed to be only  
" asleep : and it was this that gave rise to the fiction of  
" Homer, that his rites were performed by Sleep and  
" Death."

But after all these refined observations, it is probable the poet intended only to represent the death of this favourite son of Jupiter, and one of his amiable characters, in a gentle and agreeable view, without any circumstances of dread or horrour; intimating by this fiction, that he was delivered out of all the tumults and miseries of life by two imaginary deities, Sleep and Death, who alone can give mankind ease and exemption from their misfortunes.

v. 847. *Who first, brave hero ! &c.]* The poet in a very moving and solemn way turns his discourse to Patroclus. He does not accost his Muse, as it is usual with him to



## 120 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

When Heav'n itself thy fatal fury led,  
And call'd to fill the number of the dead? 850  
Adrestus first; Autonous then succeeds;  
Echeclus follows; next young Megas bleeds;  
Epistor, Menalippus, bite the ground;  
The slaughter, Elasus and Mulius crown'd:  
Then sunk Pylartes to eternal night; 855  
The rest dispersing, trust their fates to flight.

Now Troy had stoop'd beneath his matchless  
pow'r,  
But flaming Phœbus kept the sacred tow'r.  
Thrice at the battlements Patroclus strook,  
His blazing Ægis thrice Apollo shook: 860  
He try'd the fourth; when, bursting from the cloud,  
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

Patroclus! cease; this heav'n-defended wall  
Defies thy lance; not fated yet to fall;  
Thy friend, thy greater far, it shall withstand, 865  
Troy shall not stoop ev'n to Achilles' hand.

So spoke the God, who darts celestial fires;  
The Greek obeys him, and with awe retires:

do, but enquires of the hero himself who was the first, and who the last, who fell by his hand? This address distinguishes and signalizes Patroclus, (to whom Homer uses it more frequently, than I remember on any other occasion) as if he was some genius or divine being, and at the same time it is very pathetical, and apt to move our compassion. The same kind of apostrophe is used by Virgil to Camilla;

"Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo!  
"Dejicis? Aut quot humi morientia corpora fundis?"



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD.

121

While Hector checking at the Scæan gates  
His panting coursers, in his breast debates, 870  
Or in the field his forces to employ,  
Or draw the troops within the walls of Troy.  
Thus while he thought, beside him Phœbus stood,  
In Asius' shape, who reign'd by Sangar's flood ;  
(Thy brother, Hecuba ! from Dymas sprung, 875  
A valiant warriour, haughty, bold, and young.)  
Thus he accosts him. What a shameful sight !

Gods ! is it Hector that forbears the fight ?  
Were thine my vigour, this successful spear  
Should soon convince thee of so false a fear. 880  
Turn thee, ah turn thee to the field of fame,  
And in Patroclus' blood efface thy shame.  
Perhaps Apollo shall thy arms succeed,  
And Heav'n ordains him by thy lance to bleed.

So spoke th' inspiring God ; then took his flight, 885  
And plung'd amidst the tumult of the fight.  
He bids Cebrion drive the rapid car ;  
The lash resounds, the coursers rush to war.  
The God the Grecians sinking souls deprest,  
And pour'd swift spirits thro' each Trojan breast.  
Patroclus lights, impatient for the fight ; 891  
A spear his left, a stone employs his right :  
With all his nerves he drives it at the foe ;  
Pointed above, and rough and gross below :  
The falling ruin crush'd Cebrion's head, 895  
The lawless offspring of king Priam's bed ;



122 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

His front, brows, eyes, one undistinguish'd wound :  
The bursting balls drop sightless to the ground.  
The charioteer, while yet he held the rein, 899  
Struck from the car, falls headlong on the plain.  
To the dark shades the soul unwilling glides,  
While the proud victor thus his fall derides.

Good Heav'ns ! what active feats yon' artist shows ?  
What skilful divers are our Phrygian foes !

v. 904. *What skilful divers, &c.]* The original is literally thus : *It is pity that he is not nearer the sea, he would furnish good quantities of excellent oysters, and the storms would not frighten him ; see how he exercises and plunges from the top of his chariot into the plain ! Who would think that there were such good divers at Troy ?* This seems to be a little too long ; and if this passage be really Homer's, I could almost swear that he intended to let us know, that a good soldier may be an indifferent jester. But I very much doubt whether this passage be his : it is very likely these five last verses were added by some of the ancient criticks, whose caprices Homer has frequently undergone : or perhaps some of the rhapsodists, who in reciting his verses, made additions of their own to please their auditors. And what persuades me of its being so, is, that it is by no means probable that Patroclus, who had lately blamed Meriones for his little raillery against Æneas, and told him, " that it was not by raillery or invective that they were to repel the Trojans, but by dint of blows ; that council required words, but war deeds :" it is by no means probable, I say, that the same Patroclus should forget that excellent precept, and amuse himself with raillery, especially in the sight of Hector. I am therefore of opinion that Patroclus said no more than this verse, ον μένοι, &c. *Good Gods ! what an active Trojan it is, and how cleverly he dives* and that



**Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD.** 123

**Mark with what ease they sink into the sand ! 905  
Pity ! that all their practice is by land.**

Then rushing sudden on his prostrate prize,  
To spoil the carcase fierce Patroclus flies :  
Swift as a lion, terrible and bold,  
That sweeps the fields, depopulates the fold ; 910  
Pierc'd thro' the dauntless heart, then tumbles slain :  
And from his fatal courage finds his bane.  
At once bold Hector leaping from his car,  
Defends the body, and provokes the war.

the five following are strangers, though very ancient.  
*Dacier.*

I must just take notice, that however mean or ill-placed these railleries may appear, there have not been wanting such fond lovers of Homer as have admired and imitated them. Milton himself is of this number, as may be seen from those very low jests, which he has put into the mouth of Satan and his angels in the sixth book. What Æneas says to Meriones upon his dancing, is nothing so trivial as those lines ; where after the displosion of their diabolical enginry, angel rolling on archangel, they are thus derided :

— — — When we propounded terms  
Of composition, strait they chang'd their minds,  
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance ; yet for a dance they seem'd  
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps  
For joy of offer'd peace — &c.

— — — Terms that amus'd them all,  
And stumbled many ; who receives them right  
Had need from head to foot well understand :  
Not understood this gift they have besides,  
They shew us when our foes walk not upright.



## 124 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Thus for some slaughter'd hind, with equal rage,  
Two lordly rulers of the wood engage; 916  
Stung with fierce hunger, each the prey invades,  
And echoing roars rebe low thro' the shades.

Stern Hector fastens on the warriour's head,  
And by the foot Patroclus drags the dead. 920

While all around, confusion, rage, and fright  
Mix the contending hosts in mortal fight.

So pent by hills, the wild winds roar aloud  
In the deep bosom of some gloomy wood; 924  
Leaves, arms, and trees aloft in air are blown,  
The broad oaks crackle, and the Silvans groan;  
This way and that, the ratt'ling thicket bends,  
And the whole forest in one crash descends.

Not with less noise, with less tumultuous rage,  
In dreadful shock the mingled hosts engage. 930  
Darts show'r'd on darts, now round the carcase  
ring;

Now flights of arrows bounding from the string:  
Stones follow stones; some clatter on the fields,  
Some hard, and heavy, shake the sounding shields.  
But where the rising whirlwind clouds the plains, }  
Sunk in soft dust the mighty chief remains, 936 }  
And stretch'd in death, forgets the guiding reins!

Now flaming from the Zenith, Sol had driv'n  
His fervid orb thro' half the vault of Heav'n;  
While on each host with equal tempest fell 940  
The show'ring darts, and numbers sunk to hell.  
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,  
Glad conquest rested on the Grecian train.



Book XVI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 125

Then from amidst the tumult and alarms,  
They draw the conquer'd corse, and radiant arms.  
Then rash Patroclus with new fury glows, 946  
And breathing slaughter, pours amid the foes.  
Thrice on the press like Mars himself he flew,  
And thrice three heroes at each onset flew.  
There ends thy glory ! there the Fates untwine  
The last, black remnant of so bright a line, 951  
Apollo dreadful stops thy middle way ;  
Death calls, and Heav'n allows no longer day !  
For lo ! the God in dusky clouds enshrin'd,  
Approaching dealt a stagg'ring blow behind. 955  
The weighty shock his neck and shoulders feel ;  
His eyes flash darkness, his stunn'd senses reel  
In giddy darkness : far to distance flung,  
His bounding helmet on the earth pain rung.  
Achilles' plume is stain'd with dust and gore, 960  
That plume, which never stoop'd to earth before ;  
Ling us'd, untouched, in fighting fields to shine,  
And shade the temples of the man divine.

[*V. 952. Apollo dreadful, &c.]* If Homer is resolved to do any thing extraordinary, or arbitrary, which his readers may not very well relish, he takes care however to prepare them by degrees for receiving such innovations. He had before given us a sketch of this trick of the God in the thirteenth book, where Neptune serves Alcathoüs much in the same manner. Apollo here carries it a little farther ; and both these are specimens of what we are to expect from Minerva at the death of Hector in **H. xxii.**



126 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Jove dooms it now on Hector's helm to nod ;  
Not long—for fate pursues him, and the God.

His spear in shivers falls : his ample shield 966  
Drops from his arm : his baldrick strows the field :  
The corselet his astonish'd breast forsakes :  
Loose is each joint ; each nerve with horrour  
shakes.

Stupid he stares, and all-afflitless stands : 970  
Such is the force of more than mortal hands !

A Dardan youth there was, well known to fame,  
From Panthus sprung, Euphorbus was his name ;  
Fam'd for the manage of the foaming horse, 974  
Skill'd in the dart, and matchleſſ in the course :  
Full twenty knights he tumbled from the car,  
While yet he learn'd his ſudiments of war.  
His vent'rous ſpear f...rew the hero's gore ;  
He struck, he wounded, but he durſt no more ;  
Nor tho' disarm'd, Patroclus' fury stood : 980  
But swift withdrew the long-pretended wood,  
And turn'd him ſhort, and herded in the croud.  
Thus, by an arm divine, and mortal ſpear,  
Wounded at once ; Patroclus yields to fear,  
Retires for ſuccour to his ſocial train, 985  
And flies the fate, which Heav'n decreed, in vain.  
Stern Hector, as the bleeding chief he views,  
Breaks thro' the ranks, and his retreat pursues ;  
The lance arrests him with a mortal wound ;  
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound. 990  
With him all Greece was funk ; that moment all  
Her yet-surviving heroes ſeem'd to fall.



## Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD.

127

So scorch'd with heat, along the desert shore,  
The roaming lion meets a bristly boar, 994  
Fast by the spring ; they both dispute the flood,  
With flaming eyes, and jaws besmear'd with blood ;  
At length the sov'reign savage wins the strife,  
And the torn boar resigns his thirst and life.  
Patroclus thus, so many chiefs o'erthrown,  
So many lives effus'd, expires his own. 1000  
As dying now at Hector's feet he lies,  
He sternly views him, and triumphing cries :  
Lie there, Patroclus ! and with thee, the joy  
Thy pride once promis'd, of subverting Troy ;  
The fancy'd scenes of Ilion wrapt in flames, 1005  
And thy soft pleasures serv'd with captive dames !  
Unthinking man ! I fought those tow'rs to free,  
And guard that beauteous race from lords like  
thee :  
But thou a prey to vultures shalt be made ;  
— <sup>—</sup> own Achilles cannot lend thee aid ; 1010  
Too much at parting that great chief might say,  
And much enjoin thee, this important day.

1003. *Lie there, Patroclus ! &c.]* There is much spirit in this sarcasm of Hector upon Patroclus : nor is Achilles exempt from the severity of the reflection, who (as he ~~imagines~~) had persuaded his dearest friend to attempt exploits that were impracticable. He touches him also, for staying at home in security himself, and encouraging Patroclus to undertake this perilous adventure, and to seek after spoils which he was never like to enjoy. *Eustathius.*



128 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI.

"Return not, my brave friend (perhaps he said)  
Without the bloody arms of Hector dead."  
He spoke, Patroclus march'd, and thus he sped.  
Supine, and wildly gazing on the skies, 1016  
With faint, expiring breath, the chief replies.

Vain boaster ! cease, and know the Pow'rs  
divine:

Jove's and Apollo's is this deed, not thine ;  
To Heav'n is ow'd whate'er your own you call,  
And Heav'n itself disarm'd me e'er my fall. 1021  
Had twenty mortals, each thy match in might,  
Oppos'd me fairly, they had sunk in fight :  
By Fate and Phœbus was I first o'erthrown,  
Euphorbus next ; the third mean part thy own.  
But thou, imperious ! hear my latest breath ; 1026  
The Gods inspire it. .... it sounds thy death.

v. 1026. — — *Hear my latest breath,* :  
*The Gods inspire it——]*

It is an opinion of great antiquity, that when the soul ;  
on the point of being delivered from the body, and makes  
a nearer approach to the divine nature ; at such a time  
its views are stronger and clearer, and the mind endowed  
with a spirit of true prediction. So Artemon of Miletum  
says in his book of dreams, that when the soul hath col-  
lected all its powers from every limb and part of the  
body, and is just ready to be severed from it, at that time  
it becomes prophetic. Socrates also in his defence to  
the Athenians, " I am now arrived at the verge of life,  
" wherein it is familiar with people to foretel what will  
" come to pass." Eustathius.

This opinion seems alluded to in those admirable lines  
of Waller :



BOOK XVII HOMER'S ILIAD. 129

Insulting man, thou shalt be soon, as I ;  
Black fate hangs o'er thee, and thy hour draws  
nigh ;  
Even now on life's last verge I see thee stand, 1030  
I see thee fall, and by Achilles' hand.

He faints ; the soul unwilling wings her way,  
(The beauteous body left a load of clay)

Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,  
Who stand upon the threshold of the new.

v. 1032. *The death of Patroclus.* [I sometimes think I am in respect to Homer much like Sancho Panca with regard to Don Quixote. I believe upon the whole that no mortal ever came near him for wisdom, learning, and all good qualities. But sometime there are certain starts which I cannot tell what to make of, and am forced to own that my master is a little out of the way, if not quite beside himself. The present passage on the death of Patroclus, attended with so many odd circumstances to overthrow this hero, (who might, for all I can see, as have fallen by the force of Hector) are what I am at a loss to excuse, and must indeed (in my own opinion) give them up to the criticks. I really think almost all those parts of Homer which have been objected against with most clamour and fury, are honestly defensible, and none of them (to confess my private sentiment) seem to me to be faults of any consideration, except this conduct in the death of Patroclus, the length of Nestor's discourse in lib. xi. the speech of Achilles's horse in the nineteenth, the conversation of that hero with Æneas in lib. xx. and the manner of Hector's flight round the walls of Troy, lib. viii. I hope, after so free a confession, no reasonable modern will think me touched with the *Oumopœaria* of Madam Dacier and others. I am sensible of the extremes]



## 230 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVI.

Flits to the lone, uncomfortable coast ;  
A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost !

which mankind run into, in extolling and depreciating authors : we are not more violent and unreasonable in attacking those who are not yet established in fame, than in defending those who are, even in every minute trifle. Fame is a debt, which when we have kept from people as long as we can, we pay with a prodigious interest, which amounts to twice the value of the principal. Thus it is with ancient works as with ancient coins, they pass for a vast deal more than they were worth at first ; and the very obscurities and deformities which time has thrown upon them, are the sacred rust, which enhances their value with all true lovers of antiquity.

But as I have owned what seem my author's faults, and subscribed to the opinio of Horace, that Homer sometimes nods ; I think It is fit to add that of Longinus as to such negligences. I can no way so well conclude the notes to this book as w<sup>th</sup> the translation of it.

" It may not be improper to discuss the question in  
" general, which of the two is the more estimable, a  
" faulty sublime, or a faultless mediocrity ? And  
" quently, if of two works, one has the greater number  
" of beauties, and the other attains directly to the sub-  
" lime, which of these shall in equity carry the prize ?  
" I am really persuaded that the true sublime is insepa-  
" rable of that purity which we find in compositions of a  
" lower strain, and in effect that too much accuracy  
" sinks the spirit of an author ; whereas the case is gene-  
" rally the same with the favourites of nature, and those  
" qf fortune, who with the best economy cannot in the  
" great abundance they are blest with, attend to the  
" minuter articles of their expence. Writers of cool  
" imagination are cautious in their management and  
" venture nothing, merely to gain the character of be-  
" ing correct ; but the sublime is bold and enterprising,



## Book XVI. H O M E R's I L I A D. 131

Then Hector pausing, as his eycs he fed  
On th pale carcase, thus address'd the dead.

" notwithstanding that on evry advance the danger en-  
" creaseth. Here probably some will say that men take  
" a malicious satisfaction in exposing the blemishes of an  
" author; that his errors are never forgot, while the  
" most exquisite beauties leave but very imperfect traces  
" on the memory. To obviate this objection, I will  
" solemnly declare, that in my criticisms on Homer and  
" other authors, who are universally allowed to be au-  
" thentick standards of the sublime, though I have cen-  
" sured their failings with as much freedom as any one,  
" yet I have not presumed to accuse them of voluntary  
" faults, but have gently remarked some little defects  
" and negligences, which the mind, being intent on  
" nobler ideas, did not condescend to regard. And on  
" these principles I will vent. to lay it down for a  
" maxim, that the sublime (pui " on account of its  
" grandeur) is preferable to all other kinds of style,  
" however it may fall into some inequalities. The Ar-  
" gonauts of Apollonius are faultless in their kind;

Theocritus hath shewn the happiest vein imagin-  
" at for pastorals, excepting those in which he has  
" deviated from the country: and yet if it were put to  
" your choice, would you have your name descend to  
" posterity with the reputation of either of those poets,  
" rather than with that of Homer? Nothing can be  
" more correct than the Erigone of Eratosthenes: but  
" is he therefore a greater poet than Archilochus, in  
" whose compositions perspicuity and order are often  
" wanting; the divine fury of his genius being too im-  
" patient for restraint, and superiour to law? Again,  
" would you prefer the odes of Bacchilides to Pindar's, or  
" ... scenes of Ion of Chios to those of Sophocles? Their



132 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVI

From whence this boding speech, the stern decre  
Of death denounc'd, or why denounc'd to me:

" writings are allowed to be correct, polite, and delicate;  
" whereas, on the other hand, Pindar and Sophocles  
" sometimes hurry on with the greatest impetuosity, and  
" like a devouring flame seize and set on fire whatever  
" comes in their way; but on a sudden the conflagration  
" is extinguished, and they miserably flag when no body  
" expects it. Yet none have so little discernment, as not  
" to prefer the single Oedipus of Sophocles to all the tra-  
" gedies that Ion ever brought on the stage.

" In our decisions therefore on the characters of these  
" great men, who have illustrated what is useful and ne-  
" cessary with all the graces and elevation of style; we  
" must impartially confess that, with all their errors,  
" they have more perfe' ons than the nature of man  
" can almost be concei' . capable of attaining: for it is  
" merely human to .. el in other kinds of writing, but  
" the sublime ex. obleth our nature, and makes near  
" approaches to a .. inity: he who comp. no faults, is  
" barely read without censure; but a genius .. great  
" excites admiration. In short, the magnificence .. a  
" single period in one of these admirable authors, is suf-  
" ficient to atone for all their defects: nay farther, if  
" any one should collect from Homer, Demosthenes, Plato,  
" and other celebrated heroes of antiquity, the little er-  
" rors that have escaped them, they would not bear the  
" least proportion to the infinite beauties to be met with  
" in every page of their writings. It is on this account  
" that envy, through so many ages, hath never been able  
" to wrest from them the prize of eloquence, w .. i their  
" merits have so justly acquired: an acquisition which  
" they still are, and will in all probability continue ..  
" possed of,



**Book XVI. HOMER's ILIAD. 133**

**Why not as well Achilles' fate be giv'n 1040  
To F<sup>r</sup>ector's lance ? Who knows the will of Heav'n ?**

Pensive he said ; then pressing as he lay  
**His breathless bosom, tore the lance away ;**  
And upwards cast the corpse : the reeking spear  
He shakes, and charges the bold charioteer. 1045  
**But swift Automedon with loosen'd reins**  
Rapt in the chariot o'er the distant plains,  
Far from his rage th' immortal coursers drove ;  
**Th' immortal coursers were the gift of Jove.**

**" As long as streams in silver mazes rove,  
" Or spring with annual green renews the grove."**

*Mr. Fawcett.*



**T H E**  
**SEVENTEENTH BOOK**

**• F · 1 · E**

**L I A D.**

**K 4**



## THE A R G U M E N T.

The seventh battle, for the body of Patroclus : the acts of Menelaus.

*MENELAUS, upon the death of Patroclus, defends his body from the enemy : Euphorbus, who attempts it, is slain. Hector advancing, Menelaus retires ; but soon returns with Ajax, and drives him off. This Glaucus objects to Hector as a flight, who thereupon puts on the armour he had won from Patroclus, and renewes the battle. The Greeks give way, till Ajax rallies them : Æneas sustains the Trojans. Æneas and Hector attempt the chariot of Achilles, which is borne off by Automedon. The horses of Achilles deplore the loss of Patroclus ; Jupiter covers his body with a thick darkness : the noble rayer of Ajax on that occasion. Menelaus sends Antilochus to Achilles, with the news of Patroclus's death : then returns to the fight, where, though staked with the utmost fury, he and Meriones, assisted by Ajaxes, bear off the body to the ships.*

*The time is the evening of the eight and twentieth day, The scene lies in the fields before Troy.*



THE  
SEVENTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ILIAD.

**O**n the cold earth divine Patroclus spread,  
Lies pierc'd with wounds among the vulgar  
dead.

\* This is the only book of the Iliad which is a continued description of a battle, without any digression or epistle. It serves for an interval to refresh the reader. The heavenly machines too are fewer than in any other. Homer seems to have trusted wholly to the force of his own genius, as sufficient to support him, whatsoever lengths he was carried by it. But that spirit which animates the original, is what I am sensible evaporates so much in my hands : that, though I cannot think my author tedious, I should have made him seem so, if I had not translated this book with all possible conciseness. I hold there is nothing material omitted, though the version consists but of sixty-five lines more than the original.

However, one may observe there are more turns of fortune, more defeats, fallings, more accidents in this battle, than in any other ; because it was to be the first wherein the Greeks and Trojans were upon equal



## 138 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

**Great Menelaüs, touch'd with gen'rous woe,  
Springs to the front, and guards him from the fire  
Thus round her new-fall'n young the heifet moves,  
Fruit of her throes, and first-born of her loves ; 6**

terms, before the return of Achilles : and besides, all this serves to introduce the chief hero with the greater pomp and dignity.

v. 3. *Great Menelaüs*] The poet here takes occasion to clear Menelaus from the imputations of idle and effeminate, cast on him in some parts of the poem ; he sets him in the front of the army, exposing himself to dangers in defending the body of Patroclus, and gives him the conquest of Euphorbus, who had the first hand in his death. He is represented as the foremost who appears in his defence, not only as one " a like disposition of mind with Patroclus, a kind and generous friend ; but as being more immediately concerned in honour to protect from injuries the bod' / of a hero that fell in his cause. *Eustathius*. See the note on. v. 271. of the

v. 5. *Thus round her new fall'n young, &c.*] In this comparison, as Eustathius has very well observed, the poet accommodating himself to the occasion, means only to describe the affection Menelaus had for Patroclus, and the manner in which he presented himself to defend his body : and this comparison is so much the more just and agreeable, as Menelaus was a prince full of goodness and mildness. He must have little sense or knowledge in poetry, who thinks that it ought to be suppressed. It is true, we should not use it now-a-days, by reason of the low ideas we have of the animals from which it is derived ; but those notwithstanding the ideas of Homer's time they could not hinder him from making a proper use such a comparison. *Dacier*.



## Book XVII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 139

And anxious, (helpless as he lies, and bare)  
Turns and re-turns her, with a mother's care.  
Oppos'd to each that near the carcase came,  
His broad shield glimmers, and his lances flame. 10

The son of Panthus skill'd the dart to send,  
Eyes the dead hero, and insults the friend.

v. 5. *Thus round her new-falln young, &c.]* It seems to me remarkable, that the several comparisons to illustrate the concern for Patroclus are taken from the most tender sentiments of nature. Achilles, in the beginning of the sixteenth book, considers him as a child, and himself as his mother. The sorrow of Menelaus is here described as that of a heifer for her young one. Perhaps these are designed to intimate the excellent temper and goodness of Patroclus, which is express'd in that fine elegy of him in this book, v. 671. πᾶσιν, οὐδὲ μείχθη εἶναι, *He knew how to be good-natured to all*, &c. This gave all mankind these sentiments for him, and no doubt the same is intended at by the uncommon concern of the Trojans at by the uncommon concern of the Greek army to rescue his body.

The dissimilitude of manners between these two friends, Achilles and Patroclus, is very observable : such friendships are not uncommon ; and I have often assigned this reason for them, that it is natural for men to seek the assistance of those qualities in others which they want themselves. That is still better if applied to Providence, which associates men of different and contrary qualities, in order to make a more perfect system. But, whatever is curiosary in nature, Homer had a good poetical reason for it for it affords many incidents to illustrate the manners of them both more strongly and is what they call a bon-vast in painting.

v. 11. *The son of Pantus.]* The conduct of Homer is admirable, in bringing Euphorbus and Menelaus toge-



## 140 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

This hand, Atrides, laid Patroclus low ;  
Warriour ! desist, nor tempt an equal blow :  
To me the spoils my prowess won, resign, 15  
Depart with life, and leave the glory mine.

The Trojan thus : the Spartan monarch burn'd  
With gen'rous anguish, and in scorn return'd.  
Laugh'st thou not, Jove ! from thy superiour throne,  
When mortals boast of prowess not their own ? 20  
Not thus the lion glories in his might,  
Nor panther braves his spotted foe in fight,  
Nor thus the boar (those terrors of the plain)  
Man only vaunts his force, and vaunts in vain.  
But far the vainest of the boastful kind 25  
These sons of Panthus vent their haughty mind.  
Yet 'twas but late, beneath my conqu'ring steel  
This boaster's brother, Eperenor, fell,  
Against our arm which rashly he defy'd  
Vain was his vigour, and as vain his p 30

ther upon this occasion for hardly any thing but such a signal revenge for the death of his brother, could have made Euphorbus stand the encounter. Menelaus putting him in mind of the death of his brother, gives occasion (I think) to one of the finest answers in all Homer; in which the insolence of Menelaus is retorted in a way to draw pity from every reader; and I believe there is hard'y one, after such a speech, that would not wish Euphorbus had the better of Menelaus: a writer of romances wou'd not have failed to have given Euphorbus the victory. But however, it was fitting Menelaus, who had received the greatest injury, w. the most revengeful actions.



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 141

These eyes beheld him on the dust expire,  
No more to chear his spouse, or glad his sire.  
**P**resumptuous youth ! like his shall be thy doom,  
**G**o, wait thy brother to the Stygian gloom ;  
**O**r while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate ;  
**F**ools stay to feel it, and are wise too late. 36

Unmov'd, Euphorbus thus : That action known,  
**C**ome, for my brother's blood repay thy own.  
**H**is weeping father claims thy destin'd head,  
And spouse, a widow in her bridal bed. 40  
**O**n these thy conquer'd spoils I shall bestow,  
To soothe a consort's and a parent's woe.  
**N**o longer then defer the glorious strife,  
**L**et Heav'n decide our fortune, fame, and life. 45

Swift as the word ~~is~~, missile lance he flings,  
The well-aim'd weapon on the buckler rings,  
But blunted by the brass innocuous falls.  
**C**ave the father, great Aries calls,  
Nor flies the jav'lin from his arm in vain,  
It pierc'd his throat, and bethim to the plain ; 50  
**W**ide thro' the neck appears the grisly wound,  
**P**rone sinks the warriour, and his arms resound.  
**T**he shining circlets of his golden hair,  
Which ev'n the Graces might be proud to wear,  
**I**nstarr'd with gems and gold, bestrow the shore,  
**W**ith dust dishonour'd, and form'd with gore. 55

v. 55. *Instarr'd* ~~is~~ *and gold.*] We have seen here a Trojan who used gold and silver to adorn his hair ; which made Pliny say, that he doubted whether the wo-



142 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

As the young olive, in some silvan scene,  
Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green  
Lifts the gay head, in snowy flow'rets fair,  
And plays and dances to the gentle air ; 60  
When lo ! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades  
The tender plant, and withers all its shades ;  
It lies uprooted from its genial bed,  
A lovely ruin now defac'd and dead.  
Thus young, thus beautiful, Euphorbus lay, 65  
While the fierce Spartan tore his arms away.

men were the first that used those ornaments. *Est quidem apud eundem [Homerum] virorum crinibus aurum implexum, ideo nescio an prior usus a feminis cœperit.* lib. xxxiii. cap. i. He might likewise have strengthened his doubt by the custom of the Athenians, wh. put into their hair little grasshoppers of gold. *Daciae.*

v. 57. *As the young olive, &c.]* This exquisite simile finely illustrates the beaut'v and sudden fall of ~~Euphorbus~~, in which the allusion to that circumstance of his com. hair is peculiarly happ . Porphyry and Jamblicus ac. quaint us of the particl. affection Pythagoras had for these verses, which he set to the harp, and used to repeat as his own Epicedion. Perhaps it was his fondness of them, which put it into his head to say, that his soul transmigrated to him from this hero. However it was, this conceit of Pythagoras is famous in antiquity, and has given occasion to a dialogue in Lucian entitled *The Cock*, which is, I think the finest piece of that auth'r.

v. 65. *Thus young, thu beautiful Euphorbus lay.]* This is the only Trojan whose ~~wh~~ the poet laments, tha. th. might do the more honour to ~~all~~ his, his hero's friend. The comparison here used is very proper, for the olive always preserves its beauty. But where the poet speaks



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 143

Proud of his deed, and glorious in the prize,  
Affrighted Troy the tow'ring victor flies :  
Flies, as before some mountain lion's ire  
The village curs, and trembling swains retire ; 70  
When o'er the slaughter'd bull they hear him roar,  
And see his jaws distil with smoking gore ;  
All pale with fear, at distance scatter'd round,  
They shout incessant, and the vales resound.

Meanwhile Apollo view'd with envious eyes, 75  
And urg'd great Hector to dispute the prize,  
(In Mentes' shape, beneath whose martial care  
The rough Ciconians learn'd the trade of war)  
Forbear, he cry'd, with fruitless speed to chace  
Achilles' coursers, of æthereal race ; 80  
They stoop not, these, to mortal man's command,  
Or stoop to none but great Achilles' hand.  
Too long amus'd with a pursuit so vain,  
Behold the brave Euphorbus slain !  
By Sparta slain ! for ever no supprest 85  
The fire which burn'd in t' t undaunted breast !

Thus having spoke, Apollo wing'd his flight,  
And mix'd with mortals in the toils of fight :  
His words infix'd unutterable care  
Deep in great Hector's soul : thro' all the war 90

of the Lapithæ, a hardy and warlike people, he compares them to oaks, that stand unmoved in storms and tempests ; and where Hector falls by Ajax, he likens him to an oak struck down by the thunder. Just after this soft comparison upon the fatality of Euphorbus, he passes to another full of strength and terror, that of the Lion. *Euphorbus.*



344 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

He darts his anxious eye ; and instant, view'd  
The breathless hero in his blood imbru'd,  
(Forth welling from the wound, as prone he lay)  
**A**nd in the victor's hands the shining prey.  
**S**heath'd in bright arms, thro' cleaving ranks he flies,  
And sends his voice in thunder to the skies : 96  
Fierce as a flood of flame by Vulcan sent,  
It flew, and fir'd the nations as it went.  
**A**trides from the voice the storm divin'd,  
**A**nd thus explor'd his own unconquer'd mind.

"Then shall I quit Patroclus on the plain, 101  
Slain in my cause, and for my honour slain ?  
Desert the arms, the relicks of my friend ?  
Or singly, Hector and his troops attend ?  
Sure where such partial favour Heav'n bestow'd,  
To brave the hero were to brave the God : 106  
Forgive me, Greece, if once I quit the field ;  
"Tis not to Hector, but to Heav'n I yield.  
Yet, nor the God, no Heav'n, should give me fear,  
Did but the voice of ~~ax~~ reach my ear : 110  
Still would we turn, still battle on the plains,  
And give Achilles all that yet remains  
Of his and our Patroclus.—This, no more,  
The time allow'd : Troy thicken'd on the shore;  
**A**fable scene ! The terrors Hector led. 115  
Slow he ~~g~~ecedes, and sighing, quits the dead.

v. 110. *Did but the voice o<sub>r</sub> reach my ear.]* How observable is Homer's art of illustrating the valour and glory of his heroes ? Menelaus, who sees Hector ~~and all~~



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 145

So from the fold th' unwilling lion parts,  
Forc'd by loud clamours, and a storm of darts ;  
He flies indeed, but threatens as he flies,  
With heart indignant and retorted eyes. 120  
Now enter'd in the Spartan ranks, he turn'd  
His manly breast, and with new fury burn'd,  
O'er all the black battalions sent his view,  
And thro' the cloud the god-like Ajax knew ;  
Where lab'ring on the left the warriour stood, 125  
All grim in arms, and cover'd o'er with blood,  
There breathing courage, where the God of day  
Had funk each heart with terrour and dismay.

To him the king. Oh Ajax, oh my friend ;  
Haste, and Patroclus' lov'd remains defend : 130

the Trojans rushing upon him, would not retire if Apollo did not support them ; and though Apollo does support them, he would oppose even Apollo, were Ajax but near him. This is glorious for Menelaus, and yet more glorious for Ajax, and very suitable to his character ; for Ajax was the bravest of the Greeks, next to Achilles. *Dacier. Eustathius.*

v. 117. *So from the fold th' unwilling lion.]* The beauty of the retreat of Menelaus is worthy notice. Homer is a great observer of natural imagery, that brings the thing represented before our view. It is indeed true, that lions, tygers, and beasts of prey, are the only objects that can properly represent warriours ; and therefore it is no wonder they are so often introduced : the inanimate things, as floods, fires, and storms, are the best, and only images of battles.



146 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

The body to Achilles to restore,  
Demands our care ; alas, we can no more !  
For naked now, despoil'd of arms he lies ;  
And Hector glories in the dazzling prize.  
He said, and touch'd his heart. The raging pair 135  
Pierce the thick battle, and provoke the war.  
Already had stern Hector seiz'd his head,  
And doom'd to Trojan dogs th' unhappy dead ;  
But soon (as Ajax rear'd his tow'r-like shield)  
Sprung to his car, and measur'd back the field. 140  
His train to Troy the radiant armour bear,  
To stand a trophy of his fame in war.

Meanwhile great Ajax (his broad shield display'd)  
Guards the dead hero with the dreadful shade ;  
And now before, and now behind he stood : 145  
Thus in the center of some gloomy wood,  
With many a step the lioness surrounds  
Her tawny young, beset by men and hounds.  
Elate her heart, and rousing all her pow'rs,  
Dark o'er the fix'd balls each hanging eye-brow  
low'rs. 150

Fast by his side, the gen'rous Spartan glows;  
With great revenge, and feeds his inward woes.

v. 137. *Already had stern Hector, &c.]* Homer takes care, so long before hand, to lessen in his reader's mind the horrour he may conceive from the cruelty that Achilles will exercise upon the body of Hector. That cruelty will be only the punishment of this which Hector here exercises upon the body of Patroclus ; he drags him, he designs to cut off his head, and to leave his body upon the ramparts, exposed to dogs and birds of prey. *Eustathius.*



**Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD.** 147

But Glaucus, leader of the Lycian aids,  
On Hector frowning, thus his flight upbraids.  
Where now in Hector shall we Hector find ? 155  
A manly form, without a manly mind.  
Is this, O chief ! a hero's boasted fame ?  
How vain, without the merit, is the name ?  
Since battle is renounc'd, thy thoughts employ  
What other methods may preserve thy Troy : 160  
'Tis time to try if Ilion's state can stand  
By thee alone, nor ask a foreign hand ;  
Mean, empty boast ! but shall the Lycians stake  
Their lives for you ? those Lycians you forsake ?  
What from thy thankless arms can we expect ?  
Thy friend Sarpedon proves thy base neglect : 166  
Say, shall our slaughter'd bodies guard your walls,  
While unrevenge'd the great Sarpedon falls ?  
Ev'n where he dy'd for Troy, you left him there,  
A feast for dogs, and all the fowls of air. 170  
On my command if any Lycian wait,  
Hence let him march, and give up Troy to fate.  
Did such a spirit as the God impart  
Impel one Trojan hand, or Trojan heart ; 174  
(Such, as shou'd burn in ev'ry soul, that draws  
The sword for glory, and his country's cause)

169. *You left him there, A feast for dogs.]* It was highly dishonourable in Hector to forsake the body of a friend and guest, and against the laws of Jupiter Xenius, or Hospitalis. For Glaucus knew nothing of Sarpedon's being honoured with burial by the Gods, and sent embalmed into Lycia. *Eustathius.*



148 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

Ev'n yet our mutual arms we might employ,  
And drag yon' carcase to the walls of Troy.  
Oh ! were Patroclus ours, we might obtain  
Sarpedon's arms, and honour'd corse again ! 180  
Greece with Achilles' friend should be repaid,  
And thus due honours purchas'd to his shade.  
But words are vain—Let Ajax once appear,  
And Hector trembles and recedes with fear ;  
Thou dar'st not meet the terrors of his eye ; 185  
And lo ! already thou prepar'st to fly.

The Trojan chief with fix'd resentment ey'd  
The Lycian leader, and sedate reply'd.

Say, is it just (my friend) that Hector's ear  
From such a warriour such a speech should hear ?  
I deem'd thee once the wifest of thy kind, 191  
But ill this insult suits a prudent mind.  
I shun great Ajax ? I desert my train ?  
'Tis mine to prove the rash affe<sup>n</sup>tion<sup>y</sup> 'ain<sup>-</sup> ;  
I joy to mingle where the battle bleeds, 195  
And hear the thul<sup>l</sup> ler of the sounding steeds.  
But Jove's high will is ever uncontroll'd,  
The strong he withers, and confounds the bold ;  
Now crowns with fame the mighty man, and now  
Strikes the fresh garland from the victor's brow !

V. 193. *I shun great Ajax?*] Hector takes no notice of the affronts that Gaius had thrown upon him, as knowing he had in some respect a just cause to be angry ; but he cannot put up what he had said of his fearing Ajax, to which part he only replies : this is very agreeable to his heroick character. *Eustathius*.



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 149

Come, thro' yon' squadrons let us hew the way, 201  
And thou be witness, if I fear to-day :  
If yet a Greek the sight of Hector dread,  
Or yet their hero dare defend the dead.

Then turning to the martial hosts, he cries, 205  
Ye Trojans, Dardans, Lycians, and allies !  
Be men (my friends) in action as in name,  
And yet be mindful of your ancient fame.  
Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine, 209  
Torn from his friend, by right of conquest mine.

He strode along the field, as thus he said :  
(The fable plumage nodded o'er his head)  
Swift thro' the spacious plain he sent a look ;  
One instant saw, one instant overtook  
The distant band, that on the sandy shore 215  
The radiant spoils to sacred Ilion bore.

v. 209. *Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine.*] The ancients have observed that Homer causes the arms of Achilles to fall into Hector's power, to equal in some sort those two heroes, in the battle wherein he is going to engage them. Otherwise it might be urged, that Achilles could not have killed Hector without the advantage of having his armour made by the hand of a God, whereas Hector's was only of the hand of a mortal ; but since both were clad in armour made by Vulcan, Achilles's victory will be compleat, and in its full lustre. Besides this reason (which is for necessity and probability) there is also another, for ornament ; for Homer here prepares to introduce that beautiful episode of the divine armour, which Vulcan makes for Achilles. *Eustathius.*

v. 216 *the radiant arms o sacred Ilion bore.*] A difficulty may arise here, and the question may be asked why



250 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

There his own mail unbrac'd the field bestrow'd ;  
His train to Troy convey'd the massy load.  
Now blazing in th' immortal arms he stands,  
The work and present of celestial hands ; 220  
By aged Peleus to Achilles given,  
As first to Peleus by the court of Heav'n :  
His father's arms not long Achilles wears,  
Forbid by Fate to reach his father's years. 224

Him, proud in triumph, glitt'ring from afar,  
The God whose thunder rends the troubled air,  
Beheld with pity ; as apart he sat,  
And conscious, look'd thro' all the scene of fate.  
He shook the sacred honours of his head ;  
Olympus trembled, and the Godhead said : 230

Hector sent these arms to Troy ? Why did he not take them at first ? There are three answers, which I think are all plausible. The first, that Hector having killed Patroclus, and seeing the day very far advanced; had no need to take those arms for a fight almost at an end. The second, that he was impatient to shew to Priam and Andromache those glorious spoils. Thirdly, he perhaps at first intended to hang them in some temple. Glaucus's speech makes him change his resolution, he runs after those arms to fight against Ajax, and to win Patroclus's body from him. *Dacier.*

Homer (says Eustathius) does not suffer the arms to be carried into Troy for these reasons : That Hector by wearing them might the more encourage the Trojans, and be the more formidable to the Greeks : that Achilles may recover them again when he kills Hector : and that he may conquer him, even when strengthened with that divine armour.



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 15

Ah wretched man ! unmindful of thy end !  
A moment's glory ! and what fates attend ?  
In heav'nly panoply divinely bright  
Thou stand'st, and armies tremble at thy sight,  
As at Achilles self ! beneath thy dart 235  
Lies slain the great Achilles' dearer part :  
Thou from the mighty dead those arms hast torn,  
Which once the greatest of mankind had worn.  
Yet live ! I give thee one illustrious day,  
A blaze of glory e'er thou fad'st away. 240  
For ah ! no more Andromache shall come,  
With joyful tears to welcome Hector home ;

v. 231. *Jupiter's speech to Hector.*] The poet prepares us for the death of Hector, perhaps to please the Greek readers, who might be troubled to see him shining in their hero's arms. Therefore Jupiter expresses his sorrow at the approaching fate of this unfortunate prince, promises to repay his loss of life with glory, and nods, to give a certain confirmation to his words. He says, Achilles is the bravest Greek, as Glaucus had just said before ; the poet thus giving him the greatest commendations, by putting his praise in the mouth of a God, and of an enemy, who were neither of them like to be prejudiced in his favour, *Eustathius*.

How beautiful is that sentiment upon the miserable state of mankind, introduced here so artfully, and so strongly enforced, by being put into the mouth of the Supreme Being ! And how pathetick the denunciation of Hector's death, by that circumstance of Andromache's disappointment, when she shall no more receive her hero glorious from the battle, in the armour of his conquered enemy !



152 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

No more officious, with endearing charms,  
From thy tir'd limbs unbrace Pelides' arms !

Then with his sable brow he gave the nod, 243  
That seals his word ; the sanction of the God.  
The stubborn arms (by Jove's command dispos'd)  
Conform'd spontaneous, and around him clos'd ;  
Fill'd with the God, enlarg'd his members grew,  
Thro' all his veins a sudden vigour flew, 250  
The blood in brisker tides began to roll,  
And Mars himself came rushing on his soul.  
Exhorting loud thro' all the field he strode,  
And look'd, and mov'd, Achilles, or a God.  
Now Mesthles, Glaucus, Medon he inspires, 255  
Now Phorcys, Chromius, and Hippothous fires ;  
The great Thersilochus like fury found,  
Asteropaeus kindled at the sound,  
And Ennomus, in augury renown'd. }  
Hear all ye hosts, and hear, unnumber'd bands  
Of neighb'ring nations, or of distant lands ! 261

v. 247. *The stubborn arms, &c.]* The words are,

"Η, καὶ κυριέητον ἐπεφύσθη τοῖς Κερίων,  
"Ἐξέργε δ' ἔργασε τεύχε' επὶ χεῖ.

If we give ἔργασε a passive signification, it will be, the arms fitted Hector; but if an active (as those take it who would put a greater difference between Hector and Achilles) then it belongs to Jupiter; and the sense will be, Jupiter made the arms fit for him, which were too large before: I have chosen the last as the more poetical sense.

v. 260. *Unnumber'd bands of neighb'ring nations.]* Eustathius has very well explained the artifice of this speech of Hector, who indirectly answers all Glaucus's invect-



## Book XVII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 153

Twas not for state we summon'd you so far,  
To boast our numbers, and the pomp of war ;  
We came to fight ; a valiant foe to chase,  
To save our present, and our future race. 265  
For this, our wealth, our products you enjoy,  
And glean the relicks of exhausted Troy.  
Now then to conquer or to die prepare,  
To die or conquer, are the terms of war.  
Whatever hand shall win Patroclus slain, 270  
Whoe'er shall drag him to the Trojan train,  
With Hector's self shall equal honours claim ;  
With Hector part the spoil, and share the fame.

Fir'd by his words, the troops dismiss their fears,  
They join, they thicken, they pretend their spears ;  
Full on the Greeks they drive in firm array, 276  
And each from Ajax hopes the glorious prey :  
Vain hope ! what numbers shall the field o'erspread,  
What victim's perish round the mighty dead ?

tives, and humbles his vanity. Glaucus had just spoken as if the Lycians were the only allies of Troy ; and Hector here speaks of the numerous troops of different nations, which he expressly designs by calling them borderers upon his kingdom, thereby in some manner to exclude the Lycians, who were of a country more remote ; as if he did not vouchsafe to reckon them. He afterwards confutes what Glaucus said, "That if the Lycians would take his advice, they would return hom^;" for he gives them to understand, that being hired troops, they are obliged to perform their bargain, and to fight till the war is at an end. *Dacier.*



Great Ajax mark'd the growing storm from far  
And thus bespoke his brother of the war. 28,  
**O**ur fatal day, alas ! is come (my friend)  
**A**nd all our wars and glories at an end !  
"Tis not this corse alone we guard in vain,  
**C**ondemn'd to vultures on the Trojan plain ; 285  
**W**e too must yield : the same sad fate must fall  
**O**n thee, on me, perhaps (my friend) on all.  
**S**ee what a tempest direful Hector spreads,  
**A**nd lo ! it bursts, it thunders on our heads !  
**C**all on our Greeks, if any hear the call, 290  
**T**he bravest Greeks : this hour demands them all.

The warriour rais'd his voice, and wide around  
The field re-echo'd the distressful sound.  
**O**h chiefs ! oh princes ! to whose hand is giv'n  
The rule of men ; whose glory is from Heav'n ! 295  
**W**hom with due honours both Atrides grace :  
**Y**e guides and guardians of our Argive race !  
**A**ll, whom this well-known voice shall reach from  
far,

All, whom I see not thro' this cloud of war ;  
**C**ome all ! let gen'rous rage your arms employ,  
**A**nd save Patroclus from the dogs of Troy. 301

[v. 290. *Call on our Greeks.*] Eustathius gives three reasons why Ajax bids Menelaus call the Greeks to their assistance; instead of calling them himself. He might be ashamed to do it, lest it should look like fear, and turn to his dishonour : or the chiefs were more likely to obey Menelaus : or he had too much business of the war upon his hands, and wanted leisure more than the other.



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 155

Oilean Ajax first the voice obey'd,  
Swift was his pace and ready was his aid ;  
Next him Idomeneus, more slow with age,  
And Merion, burning with a hero's rage. 305  
The long-succeeding numbers who can name ?  
But all were Greeks, and eager all for fame.  
Fierce to the charge great Hector led the throng ;  
Whole Troy embodied, rush'd with shouts along.  
Thus, when a mountain-billow foams and raves,  
Where some swoln river disembogues his waves, 311  
Full in the mouth is stopp'd the rushing tide,  
The boiling ocean works from side to side,  
The river trembles to his utmost shore,  
And distant rocks rebellow to the roar. 315

Nor less resolv'd, the firm Achaian band  
With brazen shields in horrid circle stand :  
Jove, pouring darkness o'er the mingled fight,  
Conceals the warriours shining helms in night :

v. 302. *Oilean Ajax first.*] Ajax Oileus (says Eustathius) is the first that comes, being brought by his love to the other Ajax, as it is natural for one friend to fly to the assistance of another : to which we may add, he might very probably come first, because he was the swiftest of all the foes.

v. 318. *Jove pouring darkness.*] Homer, who in all his former descriptions of battles is so fond of mentioning the lustre of the arms, here shades them in darkness ; perhaps alluding to the clouds of dust that were raised, or to the throng of combatants : or else to denote the loss of Greece in Patroclus ; or lastly, that as the Hea-



156 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

To him, the chief for whom the hosts contend,  
Had liv'd not hateful, for he liv'd a friend : 324  
Dead he protects him with superior care,  
Nor dooms his carcase to the birds of air.

The first attack the Grecians scarce sustain,  
Repuls'd, they yield, the Trojans seize the slain : 325  
Then fierce they rally, to revenge led on  
By the swift rage of Ajax Telamon.

(Ajax to Peleus' son the second name,  
In graceful stature next, and next in fame.)  
With headlong force the foremost ranks he tore ; 330  
So thro' the thicket bursts the mountain-bear,  
And rudely scatters, far to distance round,  
The frightened hunter and the baying hound.  
The son of Lethus, brave Pelasgus' heir,  
Hippothous, dragg'd the carcase thro' the war ; 335  
The sinewy ancles bor'd, the feet he bound  
With thongs, inserted thro' the double wound :  
Inevitable fate o'er takes the deed ;  
Doom'd by great Ajax' vengeful lance to bleed ;  
It cleft the helmet's brazen cheeks in twain ; 340  
The shatter'd crest, and horse-hair strow the plain .  
With nerves relax'd he tumbles to the ground :  
The brain comes gushing thro' the ghastly wound :  
He drops Patroclus' foot, and o'er him spread  
Now lies, a sad companion of the dead : 345  
Far from Larissa lies, his native air,  
And ill requites his parent's tender care.

vens had mourned Sarpedon in showers of blood, so they  
might Patroclus in clouds of darkness. *Eustathius*



**Book XVII. H O M E R's . I L I A D. 157**

Lamented youth ! in life's first bloom he fell,  
Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.  
Once more at Ajax, Hector's jav'lin flies ; 350  
The Grecian marking as it cut the skies,  
Shunn'd the descending death ; which hissing on,  
Stretch'd in the dust the great Iphytus' son,  
Schedius the brave, of all the Phocian kind  
The boldest warriour, and the noblest mind : 355  
In little Panope for strength renown'd,  
He held his seat, and rul'd the realms around.  
Plung'd in his throat, the weapon drank his blood,  
And deep transpiercing, thro' the shoulder stood ;  
In clang ing arms the hero fell, and all 360  
The fields resounded with his weighty fall.  
Phorcys, as slain Hippothous he defends,  
The Telamonian lance his belly rends ;  
The hollow armour burst before the stroke,  
And thro' the wound the rushing entrails broke.  
In strong convulsions panting on the sands 366  
He lies, and grasps the dust with dying hands.

v. 356. *Panope renown'd.*] Panope was a small town twenty stadia from Chæronea, on the side of mount Par-

assus : and it is hard to know why Homer gives it the epithet of *renown'd*, and makes it the residence of Schedius, king of the Phocians ; when it was but nine hundred paces in circuit, and had no palace, nor gymnasium, nor theatre, nor market, nor fountain ; nothing in short that ought to have been in a town which is the residence of a king. Pausanias (in Phocic.) gives the reason of it ; he says, that as Phocis was exposed on that side to the inroads of the Bœotians, Schedius made use of Panope as a fort of citadel, or place of arms. *Dacier.*



## 258 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Struck at the sight, recede the Trojan train :  
The shouting Argives strip the heroes slain.  
**A**nd now had Troy, by Greece compell'd to yield,  
Fled to her ramparts, and resign'd the field ; 371  
**G**reece, in her native fortitude elate,  
With Jove averse, had turn'd the scale of fate :  
**B**ut Phœbus urg'd Æneas to the fight ;  
**H**e seem'd like aged Periphas to sight : 375  
(A herald in Anchises' love grown old,  
Rever'd for prudence ; and with prudence, bold.)

Thus he—what methods yet, oh chief ! remain,  
To save your Troy, tho' Heav'n its fall ordain ?  
There have been heroes, who by virtuous care, 380  
By valour, numbers, and by arts of war,  
Have forc'd the pow'rs to spare a sinking state,  
And gain'd at length the glorious odds of fate.  
**B**ut you, when fortune smiles, when Jove declares  
His partial favour, and assists your wars, 385  
**Y**our shameful efforts 'gainst yourselves employ,  
**A**nd force th' unwilling God to ruin Troy.

Æneas thro' the form assum'd descries  
The Pow'r conceal'd, and thus to Hector cries.  
**O**h lasting shame ! to our own fears a prey, 390  
**W**e seek our ramparts, and desert the day.

v. 375. *He seem'd like aged Periphas.*] The speech of Periphas to Æneas hints at the double fate, and the necessity of means. It is much like that of St. Paul, after he was promised that no body should perish ; he says, *Ex- .  
cept these abide, ye cannot be saved.*



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 139

A God (nor is he less) my bosom warms,  
And tells me, Jove asserts the Trojan arms.

He spoke, and foremost to the combat flew :  
The bold example all his hosts pursue.

395

Then first, Leocritus beneath him bled,  
In vain belov'd by valiant Lycomedes ;  
Who view'd his fall, and grieving at the chance,  
Swift to revenge it, sent his angry lance :

The whirling lance, with vig'rous force address,  
Descends, and pants in Apisaon's breast : 401  
From rich Pæonia's vales the warriour came,  
Next thee, Asteropeus ! in place and fame.

Asteropeus with grief beheld the slain,  
And rush'd to combat, but he rush'd in vain :  
Indissolubly firm, around the dead, 406  
Rank within rank, on buckler buckler spread,  
And hemm'd with bristled spears, the Grecians stood ;  
A brazen bulwark, and an iron wood.

Great Ajax eyes them with incessant care, 410  
And in an orb contracts the crowded war,  
Close in their ranks commands to fight or fall,  
And stands the centre and the soul of all :  
Fixt on the spot they war, and wounded, wound ;  
A sanguine torrent steeps the reeking ground ; 415  
On heaps the Greeks, on heaps the Trojans bled,  
And thick'ning round 'em, rise the hills of dead.

Greece, in close order, and collected might,  
Yet suffers least, and sways the wav'ring fight ;  
Fierce as conflicting fires, the combat burns, 420  
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.



160 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

In one thick darkness all the fight was lost ;  
The sun, the moon, and all th' ethereal host  
Seem'd as extinct : day ravish'd from their eyes,  
And all heav'n's splendours blotted from the skies.  
Such o'er Patroclus' body hung the night, 426

The rest in sunshine fought, and open light :  
Unclouded there, th' aerial azure spread,  
No vapour rested on the mountain's head,  
The golden sun pour'd forth a stronger ray, 430  
And all the broad expansion flam'd with day.  
Dispers'd around the plain, by fits they fight,  
And here, and there, their scatter'd arrows light :  
But death and darkness o'er the carcase spread,  
There burn'd the war, and there the mighty bled.

Meanwhile the sons of Nestor, in the rear, 436  
(Their fellows routed) toss the distant spear,

v. 422. *In one thick darkness, &c.]* The darkness spread over the body of Patroclus is artful upon several accounts. First, a fine image of poetry. Next, a token of Jupiter's love to a righteous man : but the chief design is to protract the action ; which, if the Trojans had seen the spot, must have been decided one way or other in a very short time. Besides, the Trojans having the better in the action, must have seized the body contrary to the intention of the author. There are innumerable instances of these little niceties and particularities of conduct in Homer.

v. 436. *Meanwhile the sons of Nestor, in the rear, &c.]* It is not without reason Homer in this place makes particular mention of the sons of Nestor. It is to prepares us against he sends one of them to Achilles, to tell him the death of his friend.



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 161

And skirmish wide : so Nestor gave command,  
When from the ships he sent the Pylian band.  
The youthful brothers thus for fame contend, 440  
Nor knew the fortune of Achilles' friend ;  
In thought they view'd him still, with martial joy,  
Glorious in arms, and dealing deaths to Troy.

But round the corse, the heroes pant for breath,  
And thick and heavy grows the work of death : 445  
O'erlabour'd now, with dust, and sweat, and gore,  
Their knees, their legs, their feet are cover'd o'er ;  
Drops follow drops, the clouds on clouds arise,  
And carnage clogs their hands, and darkness fills  
their eyes.

As when a slaughter'd bull's yet reeking hide, 450  
Strain'd with full force, and tugg'd from side to side,  
The brawny curriers stretch ; and labour o'er,  
Th' extended surface, drunk with fat and gore ;  
So tugging round the corpse both armies stood ;  
The mangled body bath'd in sweat and blood : 455  
While Greeks and Ilians equal strength employ,  
Now to the ships to force it, now to Troy.

v. 450. *As when a slaughter'd bull's yet reeking hide.*] Homer gives us a most lively description of their drawing the body on all sides, and instructs us in the ancient manner of stretching hides, being first made soft and supple with oil. And though this comparison be one of those mean and humble ones which some have objected to, yet it has also its admirers for being so expressive, and for representing to the imagination the most strong and exact idea of the subject in hand. *Eustathius.*



## 162 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Not Pallas' self, her breast when fury warms,  
Nor he, whose anger sets the world in arms,  
Could blame this scene; such rage, such horrour  
reign'd ;

460

Such, Jove to honour the great dead ordain'd.

Achilles in his ships at distance lay,  
Nor knew the fatal fortune of the day;  
He, yet unconscious of Patroclus' fall,  
In dust extended under Ilion's wall,

465

Expects him glorious from the conquer'd plain,  
And for his wish'd return prepares in vain;  
Tho' well he knew, to make proud Ilion bend,  
Was more than Heav'n had destin'd to his friend:  
Perhaps to him: this Thetis had reveal'd;

470

The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.

v. 458. *Not Pallas' self.*] Homer says in the original, "Minerva could not have found fault, though she were angry." Upon which Eustathius ingeniously observes, how common and natural it is for persons in anger to turn criticks, and find faults where there are none.

v. 468. — — — *To make proud Ilion bend,*  
*Was more than Heav'n had promis'd to his friend:*  
*Perhaps to him: — ]*

In these words the poet artfully hints at Achilles's death; he makes him not absolutely to flatter himself with the hopes of ever taking Troy, in his own person; however he does not say this expressly, but passes it over as an ungrateful subject. *Eustathius.*

v. 471. *The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.*] Here (says the same author) we have two rules laid down for common use. One, not to tell our friends all their mischances at once, it being often necessary to hide part of them,



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 163

Still rag'd the conflict round the hero dead,  
And heaps on heaps, by mutual wounds they bled.  
Curs'd be the man (ev'n private Greeks would say)  
Who dares desert this well-disputed day ! 475  
First may the cleaving earth before our eyes  
Gape wide, and drink our blood for sacrifice !  
First perish all, ere haughty Troy shall boast  
We lost Patroclus, and our glory lost.

Thus they. While with one voice the Trojans  
said, 480

Grant this day, Jove ! or heap us on the dead !  
Then clash their sounding arms ; the clangors  
rise,

And shake the brazen concave of the skies.

Thetis does from Achilles : the other, not to push men  
of courage upon all that is possible for them to do. Thus  
Achilles, though he thought Patroclus able to drive the  
Trojans back to their gates, yet he does not order him  
to do so much ; but only to save the ships, and beat them  
back into the field.

Homer's admonishing the reader that Achilles's mother  
had concealed the circumstance of the death of his friend  
when she instructed him in his fate ; and that all he  
new, was only that Troy could not be taken at that  
time ; this is a great instance of his care of the probabi-  
lity, and of his having the whole plan of the poem at  
once in his head. For upon the supposition that Achilles  
was instructed in his fate, it was a natural objection,  
how came he to hazard his friend ? If he was ignorant,  
on the other hand, of the impossibility of Troy's being  
taken at that time, he might, for all he knew, be robbed  
by his friend (of whose valour he had so good an opinion)  
of that glory, which he was unwilling to part with.



## 164 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,  
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ; 125

v. 484. *At distance from the scene of blood.*] If the horses had not gone aside out of the war, Homer could not have introduced so well what he designed to their honour. So he makes them weep in secret (as their master Achilles used to do) and afterwards come into the battle, where they are taken notice of and pursued by Hector. *Eustathius.*

v. 485. *The pensive steeds of great Achilles, &c.*] It adds a great beauty to the poem when inanimate things act like animate. Thus the heavens tremble at Jupiter's nod, the sea parts itself to receive Neptune, the groves of Ida shake beneath Juno's feet, &c. As also to find aniinate or brute creatures addrest to, as if rational : so Hector encourages his horses ; and one of Achilles's is not only endued with speech, but with foreknowledge of future events. Here they weep for Patroclus, and stand fixed and immoveable with grief : thus is this hero universally mourned, and every thing concurs to lament his loss. *Eustathius.*

As to the particular fiction of the horses weeping, it is countenanced both by naturalists and historians. Aristotle and Pliny write, that these animals often deplo their masters lost in battle, and even shed tears for them. So Solinus, cap. 47. Ælian relates the like of elephants when they are carried from their native country, *De Animal.* lib. x. cap. 17. Suetonius, in the life of Cæsar, tells us, that several horses which at the passage of the Rubicon had been consecrated to Mars, and turned loose on the banks, were observed for some days after to abstain from feeding, and to weep abundantly. *Proximis diebus, equorum greges quos in trajiciendo Rubicone flumine Marti consecrârat, ac sine custode vagos dimiserat, comperit tabulo pertinacissimè abstinere, ubertiorque flere, cap. 81.*



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 165

Their god-like master slain before their eyes,  
They wept, and shar'd in human miseries.  
In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,  
Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain;  
Nor to the fight, nor Hellespont they go, 490  
Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe:  
Still as a tomb-stone, never to be mov'd,  
On some good man, or woman unreprov'd  
Lays its eternal weight; or fix'd as stands  
A marble courser by the sculptor's hands, 495

Virgil could not forbear copying this beautiful circumstance in those fine lines on the horse of Pallas.

“ Post bellator equus, positus insignibus, Æthon  
“ It lacrymans, guttisque humectat grandibus ora.”

v. 494. *Or fix'd as stands A marble courser, &c.]* Homer alludes to the custom in those days of placing columns upon tombs, on which columns there were frequently chariots with two or four horses. This furnished Homer with this beautiful image, as if these horses meant to remain there, to serve for an immortal monument to Patroclus. *Dacier.*

I believe M. Dacier refines too much in this note. Homer says, —*ἵνε γυναικίς*, and seems to turn the thought only on the firmness of the column, and not on the imagery of it: which would give it an air a little too modern, like that of Shakespear, *She sat like Patience on a monument, smiling at Gravity.*—Be it as it will, this conjecture is ingenious; and the whole comparison is as beautiful as just. These horses standing still to mourn for their master, could not be more finely represented than by the dumb sorrow of images standing over a tomb. Perhaps the very posture in which these horses are described, their heads bowed down, and their manes falling in the dust,



## 166 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Plac'd on the hero's grave. Along their face  
The big round drops cours'd down with silent pace,  
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late  
Circled their arched necks, and wav'd in state, 499  
Trail'd on the dust beneath the yoke were spread,  
And prone to earth was hung their languid head :  
Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,  
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke.

Unhappy coursers of immortal strain !  
Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain ; 505  
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,  
Only alas ! to share in mortal woe ?  
For ah ! what is there, of inferiour birth,  
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth ;  
What wretched creature of what wretched kind, 510  
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind ?  
A miserable race ! but cease to mourn ;  
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne  
High on the splendid car : one glorious prize  
He rashly boasts ; the rest our will denies. 515  
Ourself will swiftness to your nerves impart,  
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.  
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear  
Safe to the navy thro' the storm of war,  
For yet 'tis giv'n to Troy, to ravage o'er 520  
The field, and spread her slaughter to the shore .

has an allusion to the attitude in which those statues on monuments were usually represented : there are bas-reliefs that favour this conjecture.



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 167

The sun shall see her conquer, 'till his fall  
With sacred darkness shades the face of all.

He said ; and breathing in th' immortal horse  
Excessive spirit, urg'd 'em to the course ; 525  
From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear  
The kindling chariot thro' the parted war :  
So flies a vulture thro' the clam'rous train  
Of geese, that scream, and scatter round the plain.  
From danger now with swiftest speed they flew,  
And now to conquest with like speed pursue ; 531  
Sole in the seat the charioteer remains,  
Now plies the jav'lin, now directs the reins :  
Him brave Alcimedon beheld distrest,  
Approach'd the chariot, and the chief address. 535

What God provokes thee, rashly thus to dare,  
Alone, unaided, in the thickest war ?  
Alas ! thy friend is slain, and Hector wields  
Achilles' arms triumphant in the fields.

In happy time (the charioteer replies) 540  
The bold Alcimedon now greets my eyes :

v. 522. *The sun shall see Troy conquer.*] It is worth observing with what art and œconomy Homer conducts his tale, to bring on the catastrophe. Achilles must hear Patroclus's death ; Hector must fall by his hand : this cannot happen if the armies continue fighting about the b'ry of Patroclus under the walls of Troy. Therefore, to change the face of affairs, Jupiter is going to raise the courage of the Trojans, and make them repulse and chase the Greeks again as far as their fleet ; this obliges Achilles to go forth though without arms, and thereby every thing comes to an issue. *Dacier.*



168 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

No Greek like him, the heav'nly steeds restrains,  
Or holds their fury in suspended reins:  
Patroclus, while he liv'd, their rage could tame,  
But now Patroclus is an empty name! 545  
To thee I yield the seat, to thee resign  
The ruling charge: the task of fight be mine.

He said. Alcimedon, with active heat,  
Snatches the reins, and vaults into the seat.  
His friend descends. The chief of Troy descriy'd,  
And call'd Æneas fighting near his side. 551  
Lo, to my fight beyond our hope restor'd,  
Achilles' car, deserted of its lord!  
The glorious steeds our ready arms invite,  
Scarce their weak drivers guide them thro' the  
fight: 555

v. 555. *Scarce their weak drivers.*] There was but one driver, since Alcimedon was alone upon the chariot, and Automedon was got down to fight. But in poetry, as well as in painting, there is often but one moment to be taken hold on. Hector sees Alcimedon mount the chariot, before Automedon was descended from it; and thereupon judging of their intention, and seeing them both as yet upon the chariot, he calls to Æneas. He terms them both drivers in mockery, because he saw them take the reins one after the other; as if he said, that chariot had two drivers, but never a fighter. It is one single moment that makes this image. In reading the poets one often falls into great perplexities, for want of rightly distinguishing the point of time in which they speak. Dacier.

The art of Homer, in this whole passage concerning Automedon, is very remarkable; in finding out the only



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 169

Can such opponents stand, when we assail ?  
Unite thy force, my friend, and we prevail.

The son of Venus to the counsel yields,  
Then o'er their backs they spread their solid shields :  
With brass resplendent the broad surface shin'd, 56  
And thick bull-hides the spacious concave lin'd.  
Them Chromius follows, Aretus succeeds,  
Each hopes the conquest of the lofty steeds ;  
In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye burn,  
In vain advance ! not fated to return. 565

proper occasion, for so renowned a person as the charioteer of Achilles to signalize his valour.

v. 564. *In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye burn,  
In vain advance ! not fated to return.]*

These beautiful anticipations are frequent in the poets, who affect to speak in the character of prophets, and men inspired with the knowledge of futurity. Thus Virgil to Turnus,

“ Nescia mens hominum fati.—Turno tempus erit, &c.”

So Tasso, Cant. xii. when Argante had vowed the destruction of Tancred ;

“ O vanigliamenti ! Ecco contrari  
“ Seguir tanto gli effetti a l'alta speme :  
“ E cader questi in teneon pari estinto  
“ Sotto colui, ch' ei fà già preso, e vinto.”

And Milton makes the like apostrophe to Eve at her leaving Adam before she met the serpent ;

- - — — — She to him engag'd  
To be return'd by noon amid the bower,  
And all things in best order to invite



170 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

Unmov'd, Automedon attends the fight,  
Implores th' Eternal, and collects his might.  
Then turning to his friend, with dauntless mind :  
Oh keep the foaming coursers close behind !  
Full on my shoulders let their nostrils blow, 570  
For hard the fight, determin'd is the foe ;  
'Tis Hector comes ; and when he seeks the prize,  
War knows no mean : he wins it, or he dies.

Then thro' the field he sends his voice aloud,  
And calls th' Ajaces from the warring croud, 575  
With great Atrides. Hither turn (he said)  
Turn, where distress demands immediate aid ;  
The dead, encircled by his friends, forego,  
And save the living from a fiercer foe. 580  
Unhelp'd we stand, unequal to engage  
The force of Hector, and Æneas' rage :  
Yet mighty as they are, my force to prove  
Is only mine : th' event belongs to Jove. 584

He spoke, and high the sounding jav'lin flung,  
Which pass'd the shield of Aretus the young ;  
It pierc'd his belt, emboss'd with curious art ;  
Then in the lower belly stuck the dart.  
As when a pond'rous ax descending full, 589  
Cleaves the broad forehead of some brawny bull ;  
Struck 'twixt the horns, he springs with many a bound,  
Then tumbling rolls enormous on the ground :

Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.  
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve !  
Thou never from that hour, in paradise,  
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose.



## Book XVII. H O M E R's I L I A D.

171

Thus fell the youth ; the air his soul receiv'd,  
And the spear trembled as his entrails heav'd.

Now at Automedon the Trojan foe 595  
Discharg'd his lance ; the meditated blow,  
Stooping, he shunn'd ; the jav'lin idly fled,  
And hiss'd innoxious o'er the hero's head :  
Deep rooted in the ground, the forceful spear  
In long vibrations spent its fury there.

With clashing falchions now the chiefs had 600  
clos'd,

But each brave Ajax heard, and interpos'd ;  
Nor longer Hector with his Trojans stood,  
But left their slain companion in his blood :  
His arms Automedon divests, and cries,  
Accept, Patroclus, this mean sacrifice. 605  
Thus have I sooth'd my griefs, and thus have paid,  
Poor as it is, some off'ring to thy shade.

So looks the lion o'er a mangled boar,  
All grim with rage, and horrible with gore ;  
High on the chariot at one bound he sprung, 610  
And o'er his seat the bloody trophies hung.

And now Minerva, from the realms of air  
Descends impetuous, and renew's the war ;  
For, pleas'd at Iength the Grecian arms to aid,  
The Lord of Thunders sent the blue-ey'd Maid.  
As when high Jove denouncing future woe, 616  
O'er the dark clouds extends his purple bow,  
(In sign of tempests from the troubled air,  
Or from the rage of man, destructive war)



## 172 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

The drooping cattle dread th' impending skies, 620  
And from his half-till'd field the lab'rer flies.  
In such a form the Goddess round her drew  
A livid cloud, and to the battle flew.  
Assuming Phœnix' shape, on earth she falls,  
And in his well-known voice to Sparta calls. 625  
And lies Achilles' friend belov'd by all,  
A prey to dogs beneath the Trojan wall ?  
What shame to Greece for future times to tell,  
To thee the greatest in whose cause he fell !

O chief, oh father ! (Atreus' son replies) 630  
O full of days ! by long experience wise !  
What more desires my soul, than here unmov'd,  
To guard the body of the man I lov'd ?  
Ah would Minerva send me strength to rear 364  
This weary'd arm, and ward the storm of war !  
But Hector, like the rage of fire we dread,  
And Jove's own glories blaze around his head.

Pleas'd to be first of all the pow'rs addrest,  
She breathes new vigour in her hero's breast, 639  
And fills with keen revenge, with fell despight,  
Desire of blood, and rage, and lust of fight.  
So burns the vengeful hornet (soul all o'er)  
Repuls'd in vain, and thirsty still of gore ;

v. 642. So burns the vengeful hornet, &c.] It is literally in the Greek, *She inspir'd the hero with the boldness of a fly.* There is no impropriety in the comparison, this animal being of all others the most persevering in its attacks, and the most difficult to be beaten off : the occasion also of the comparison being the resolute persistance of Menelaus



Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD. 173

(Bold son of air and heat) on angry wings 644  
Unarm'd, untir'd, he turns, attacks, and stings.  
Fir'd with like ardour fierce Atrides flew,  
And sent his soul with ev'ry lance he threw.

There stood a Trojan, not unknown to fame,  
Eëtion's son, and Podes was his name ;  
With riches honour'd, and with courage blest, 650  
By Hector lov'd, his comrade, and his guest ;  
Thro' his broad belt the spear a passage found,  
And pond'rous as he falls, his arms resound.  
Sudden at Hector's side Apollo stood,  
Like Phænops, Asius' son, appear'd the God ; 655  
(Asius the great, who held his wealthy reign  
In fair Abydos, by the rolling main.)

Oh prince (he cry'd) oh foremost once in fame !  
What Grecian now shall tremble at thy name ?  
Dost thou at length to Meneläus yield, 660  
A chief once thought no terrour of the field ;

about the dead body, renders it still the more just. But our present idea of the fly is indeed very low, as takem from the littleness and insignificancy of this creature. However, since there is really no meanness in it, there ought to be none in expressing it ; and I have done my best in the translation to keep up the dignity of my author.

v. 651. By *Hector lov'd, his comrade, and his guest.*] Podes, the favourite and companion of Hector, being kill'd on this occasion, seems a parallel circumstance to the death of Achilles's favourite and companion ; and was probably put in here on purpose to engage Hector on the like occasion with Achilles.



174 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Yet singly, now, the long-disputed prize  
He bears victorious, while our army flies.  
By the same arm illustrious Podes bled ;  
The friend of Hector, unreveng'd, is dead ! 665  
This heard, o'er Hector spreads a cloud of woe,  
Rage lifts his lance, and drives him on the foe.

But now th' Eternal shook his fable shield,  
That shaded Ide and all the subject field,  
Beneath its ample verge. A rolling cloud 670  
Involv'd the mount ; the thunder roar'd aloud ;  
Th' affrighted hills from their foundations nod,  
And blaze beneath the lightnings of the God :  
At one regard of his all-seeing eye,  
The vanquish'd triumph, and the victors fly. 675

Then trembled Greece : the flight Peneleus led :  
For as the brave Bœotian turn'd his head  
To face the foe, Polydamas drew near,  
And raz'd his shoulder with a shorten'd spear :  
By Hector wounded, Leitus quits the plain, 680 }  
Pierc'd thro' the wrist ; and raging with the pain, }  
Grap's his once formidable lance in vain.

As Hector follow'd, Idomen address'd  
The flaming jav'lin to his manly breast ;  
The brittle point before his corselet yields ; 685  
Exulting Troy with clamour fills the fields :  
High on his chariot as the Cretan stood,  
The son of Priam whirl'd the missive wood ;  
But erring from its aim, th' impetuous spear  
Struck to the dust the 'squire and charioteer 690



## Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD.

175

Of martial Merion : Cœranus his name,  
Wh<sup>o</sup> left fair Lyctus for the fields of fame.  
On foot bold Merion fought ; and now laid low,  
Had grac'd the triumphs of his Trojan foe ; 694  
But the brave 'squire the ready coursers brought,  
And with his life his master's safety bought.  
Between his cheek and ear the weapon went,  
The teeth it shatter'd, and the tongue it rent.  
Prone from the seat he tumbles to the plain ;  
His dying hand forgets the falling rein : 700  
This Merion reaches, bending from the car,  
And urges to desert the hopeless war ;  
Idomeneus consents ; the lash applies ;  
And the swift chariot to the navy flies.

Nor Ajax less the will of heav'n descry'd, 705  
And conquest shifting to the Trojan side,  
Turn'd by the hand of Jove. Then thus begun,  
To Atreus' seed, the god-like Telamon.

Alas ! who sees not Jove's almighty hand  
Transfers the glory to the Trojan band ? 710

Whether the weak or strong discharge the dart,  
He guides each arrow to a Grecian heart :  
Not so our spears : incessant tho' they rain,  
He suffers ev'ry lance to fall in vain.

Deserted of the God, yet let us try 715

What human strength and prudence can supply  
If yet his honour'd corse, in triumph borne,  
May glad the fleets that hope not our return,  
We tremble yet, scarce rescu'd from their fates,  
And still hear Hector thund'ring at their gates. 720



176 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Some hero too must be dispatch'd to bear  
The mournful message to Pelides' ear ;  
For sure he knows not, distant on the shore,  
His friend, his lov'd Patroclus, is no more.  
But such a chief I spy not thro' the host :      725  
The men, the steeds, the armies, all are lost  
In gen'ral darkness—Lord of earth and air !  
Oh King ! oh Father ! hear my humble pray'r :  
Dispel this cloud, the light of Heav'n restore ;  
Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more :      730  
If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,  
But let us perish in the face of day !

v. 721. *Some hero too must be dispatch'd, &c.]* It seems odd that they did not sooner send this message to Achilles; but there is some apology for it from the darkness, and the difficulty of finding a proper person. It was not every body that was proper to send, but one who was a particular friend to Achilles, who might condole with him. Such was Antilochus who is sent afterwards, and who, besides, had that necessary qualification of being πειδας ακριβης. *Eustathius.*

v. 731. *If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,*  
*But let us perish in the face of day !]*

This thought has been looked upon as one of the sublimest in Homer. Longinus represents it in this manner :  
“ The thickest darkness had on a sudden covered the  
“ Grecian army, and hindered them from fighting :  
“ when Ajax not knowing what course to take, cries out,  
“ Oh Jove ! disperse this darkness which covers the Greeks,  
“ and if we must perish, let us perish in the light ! This is  
“ a sentiment truly worthy of Ajax. He does not, ~~say~~  
“ for life ; that had been unworthy a hero : but be-



## Book XVII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 177

With tears the hero spoke, and at his pray'r  
The God relenting, clear'd the clouded air;

"cause in that darkness he could not employ his valour  
to any glorious purpose, and vexed to stand idle in the  
field of battle, he only prays that the day may appear,  
as being assured of putting an end to it worthy his  
great heart, though Jupiter himself should happen to  
oppose his efforts."

M. l' Abbé Terasson (in his dissertation on the Iliad) endeavours to prove that Longinus has misrepresented the whole context and sense of this passage of Homer. The fact (says he) is, that Ajax is in a very different situation in Homer from that wherein Longinus describes him. He has not the least intention of fighting, he thinks only of finding out some fit person to send to Achilles; and this darkness hindering him from seeing such a one, is the occasion of his prayer. Accordingly it appears by what follows, that as soon as Jupiter had dispersed the cloud, Ajax never falls upon the enemy, but in consequence of his former thought orders Menelaus to look for Antilochus, to dispatch him to Achilles with the news of the death of his friend. Longinus (continues this author) had certainly forgot the place from whence he took this thought; and it is not the first citation from Homer which the ancients have quoted wrong. Thus Aristotle attributes to Calypso the words of Ulysses in the twelfth book of the Odyssey; and confounds together two passages, one of the second, the other of the fifteenth book of the Iliad. [Ethic. ad Nicom. l. ii. c. 9. and l. iii. c. 11.] And thus Cicero ascribed to Agamemnon a long discourse of Ulysses in the second Iliad; [De divinatione. l. vii.] and cited as Ajax's, the speech of Hector in the sixteenth. [See Aul. Gellius, l. xv. c. 6.] One has no reason to wonder at this, since the ancients having



178 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

Forth burst the sun with all-enlight'ning ray ; 735  
The blaze of armour flasli'd against the day.  
Now, now, Atrides ! cast around thy sight,  
If yet Antilochus survives the fight,

Homer almost by heart, were for that very reason the more subject to mistake in citing him by memory.

To this I think one may answer, that granting it was partly the occasion of Ajax's prayer to obtain light, in order to send to Achilles, (which he afterwards does) yet the thought which Longinus attributes to him, is very consistent with it ; and the last line expresses nothing else but an heroick desire rather to die in the light, than escape with safety in the darkness.

"Εν δὲ τάς καὶ σλεσσον, ἐπεὶ νῦ τοι εὐαδεν θτως.

But indeed the whole speech is only meant to paint the concern and distress of a brave general ; the thought of sending a messenger is only a result from that concern and distress, and so but a small circumstance, which cannot be said to occasion the prayer.

Mons. Boileau has translated this passage in two lines,

" Grand Dieu ! chasse la nuit qui nous couvre les yeux,  
" Et combats contre nous à la clarté des cieux."

And Mr. la Motte yet better in one,

" Grand Dieu ! rends nous le jour, & combats contre nous !"

But both these (as Dacier very justly observes) are contrary to Homer's sense. He is far from representing Ajax of such a daring impiety, as to bid Jupiter combat against him ; but only makes him ask for light, that if it be his will the Greeks shall perish, they may perish in open day. καὶ σλεσσον— (says he) that is, *abandon us, withdraw from us your assistance* ; for those who are deserted by Jove must perish infallibly. This decorum of Homer ought to have been preserved.



**Book XVII. HOMER's ILIAD.** 179

**Let him to great Achilles' ear convey  
The fatal news——Atrides hasten away.** 740

So turns the lion from the nightly fold,  
Tho' high in courage, and with hunger bold,  
Long gall'd by herdsmen, and long vex'd by hounds,  
Stiff with fatigue, and fretted sore with wounds;  
The darts fly round him from an hundred hands,  
And the red terrors of the blazing brands: 746  
'Till late, reluctant, at the dawn of day  
Sour he departs, and quits th' untaasted prey.  
So mov'd Atrides from his dang'rous place  
With weary limbs, but with unwilling pace; 750  
The foe, he fear'd, might yet Patroclus gain,  
And much admonish'd, much adjur'd his train.

Oh guard these relicks to your charge confign'd,  
And bear the merits of the dead in mind;  
How skil'd he was in each obliging art; 755  
The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart:  
He was, alas! but fate decreed his end;  
In death a hero, as in life a friend!

v. 756. *The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart.]* This is a fine elogium of Patroclus: Homer dwells upon it on purpose, lest Achilles's character should be mistaken; and shews by the praises he bestows here upon goodness, that Achilles's character is not commendable for morality. Achilles's manners, entirely opposite to those of Patroclus, are not morally good; they are only poetically so, that is to say, they are well marked; and discover before-hand what resolutions that hero will take: as hath been at large expounded upon Aristotle's Poeticks. *Dacier.*



180 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVII.

So parts the chief ; from rank to rank he flew,  
And round on all sides sent his piercing view. 266  
As the bold bird, endu'd with sharpest eye  
Of all that wing the mid aërial sky,  
The sacred eagle, from his walks above  
Looks down, and sees the distant thicket move ;  
Then stoops, and swooping on the quiv'ring hare,  
Snatches his life amid the clouds of air. 766

Not with less quickness, his exerted sight  
Pass'd this, and that way, thro' the ranks of fight :  
'Till on the left the chief he sought, he found ;  
Chearing his men, and spreading deaths around. 770

To him the king. Belov'd of Jove ! draw near,  
For sadder tidings never touch'd thy ear,  
Thy eyes have witness'd, what a fatal turn !  
How Ilion triumphs, and th' Achaians mourn ;  
This is not all : Patroclus, on the shore. 775  
Now pale and dead, shall succour Greece no more.  
Fly to the fleet, this instant fly, and tell  
The sad Achilles, how his lov'd-one fell :  
He too may haste the naked corpse to gain ;  
The arms are Hector's, who despoil'd the slain. 780

The youthful warriour heard with silent woe,  
From his fair eyes the tears began to flow ;

*[781. The youthful warriour heard with silent woe.]*  
Homer ever represents an excess of grief by a deep horrour, silence, weeping, and not enquiring into the manner of the friend's death ; nor could Antilochus have expressed his sorrow in any manner so moving as if Eustathius.



## Book XVII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 181

Big with the mighty grief, he strove to say  
What sorrow dictates, but no word found way.  
To brave Laodocus his arms he flung, 785  
Who near him wheeling, drove his steeds along ;  
Then ran, the mournful message to impart,  
With tear-full eyes, and with dejected heart.

Swift fled the youth : nor Menelaüs stands,  
(Tho' sore distrest) to aid the Pylian bands ; 790  
But bids bold Thrasymede those troops sustain ;  
Himself returns to his Patroclus slain.

Gone is Antilochus (the hero said)  
But hope not, warriours, for Achilles' aid :  
Tho' fierce his rage, unbounded be his woe, 795  
Unarm'd, he fights not with the Trojan foe.  
'Tis in our hands alone our hopes remain,  
'Tis our own vigour must the dead regain ;  
And sa' e ourselves, while with impetuous hate  
Troy po 1rs along, and this way rolls our fate. 800

v. 785. *To brave Laodocus his arms he flung.]* Antilochus leaves his armour, not only that he might make the more haste, but (as the ancients conjecture) that he might not be thought to be absent by the enemies ; and that seeing his armour on some other person, they might think him still in the fight. *Eustathius.*

v. 794. *But hope not, warriours, for Achilles' aid :  
Unarm'd.—]*

"This is a ingenious way of making the valour of Achilles appear the greater ; who, though without arms, goes forth in the next book, contrary to the expectation of Achilles & Menelaus. *Dacier.*



182 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.

'Tis well (said Ajax) be it then thy care  
With Merion's aid, the weighty corse to rear -  
Myself, and my bold brother will sustain  
The shock of Hector and his charging train :  
Nor fear we armies, fighting side by side ;      805  
What Troy can dare, we have already try'd,  
Have try'd it, and have stood. The hero said.  
High from the ground the warriours heave the dead.  
A gen'ral clamour rises at the sight :  
Loud shout the Trojans, and renew the fight.      810  
Not fiercer rush along the gloomy wood,  
With rage infatiate and with thirst of blood,  
Voracious hounds, that many a length before  
Their furious hunters, drive the wounded boar ;  
But if the savage turns his glaring eye,      815  
They howl aloof, and round the forest fly.  
Thus on retreating Greece the Trojans peär,  
Wave their thick falchions, and their jav'lins show'r.  
But Ajax turning, to their fears they yield,  
All pale they tremble, and forsake the field.      820

While thus aloft the hero's corse they bear,  
Behind them rages all the storm of war ;  
Confusion, tumult, horrour, o'er the throng  
Of men, steeds, chariots, urg'd the rout along :  
Less fierce the winds with rising flames con-  
spire,      825  
To whelm some city under waves of fire

v. 825, &c.] The heap of images which Homer throws together at the end of this book, makes one faint



## Book XVII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 183

Now sink in gloomy clouds the proud abodes ;  
Now crack the blazing temples of the Gods ;  
The rumbling torrent thro' the ruin rolls, 829  
And sheets of smoke mount heavy to the poles.  
The heroes sweat beneath their honour'd load :  
As when two mules, along the rugged road,  
From the steep mountain with exerted strength  
Drag some vast beam, or masts unwieldy length ;  
Inly they groan, big drops of sweat distill, 835  
Th' enormous timber lumb'ring down the hill :  
So these——Behind, the bulk of Ajax stands,  
And breaks the torrent of the rushing bands.

action appear with a very beautiful variety. The description of the burning of a city is short, but very lively. That of Ajax alone bringing up the rear-guard, and shielding those that bore the body of Patroclus from the whole Trojan host, gives a prodigious idea of Ajax, and as Homer has often hinted, makes him just second to Achilles. The image of the beam paints the great stature of Patroclus : that of the hill dividing the stream is noble and natural.

He compares the Ajaces to a boar, for their fierceness and boldness ; to a long bank that keeps off the course of the waters, for their standing firm and immoveable in the battle : those that carry the dead body, to mules dragging a vast beam through rugged paths for their laboriousness : the body carried, to a beam, for being heavy and inanimate : the Trojans to dogs, for their boldness ; and to water, for their agility and moving backwards ; and forwards : the Greeks to a flight of starlings or jays, for their timorousness and swiftness. *Euripides*



**184 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVII.**

**Thus when a river swell'd with sudden rains  
Spreads his broad waters o'er the level plains, 840  
Some interposing hill the stream divides,  
And breaks its force, and turns the winding tides.  
Still close they follow, close the rear engage :  
Æneas storms, and Hector foams with rage :  
While Greece a heavy, thick retreat maintains, 845  
Wedg'd in one body, like a flight of cranes,  
That shriek incessant while the falcon, hung  
High on pois'd pinions, threats their callow young.  
So from the Trojan chiefs the Grecians fly,  
Such the wild terrour, and the mingled cry : 850  
Within, without the trench, and all the way,  
Strow'd in bright heaps, their arms and armour lay ;  
Such horrour Jove imprest ! yet still proceeds  
The work of death, and still the battle bleeds.**



**T H E**  
**E I G H T E E N T H B O O K**  
**O F T H E**  
**K L I A D**



## THE A R G U M E N T.

**The grief of Achilles, and new armour made him by Vulcan.**

*THE news of the death of Patroclus, is brought to Achilles by Antilochus. Thetis hearing his lamentations, comes with all her sea-nymphs to comfort him. The speeches of the mother and son on this occasion. Iris appears to Achilles by the command of Juno, and orders him to shew himself at the head of the intrenchments. The sight of him turns the fortune of the day, and the body of Patroclus is carried off by the Greeks. The Trojans call a council, where Hector and Polydamas disagree in their opinions; but the advice of the former prevails, to remain encamped in the field: the grief of Achilles over the body of Patroclus.*

*Thetis goes to the palace of Vulcan to obtain new arms for her son. The description of the wonderful works of Vulcan; and lastly, that noble one of the shield of Achilles.*

*The latter part of the nine and twentieth day, and the night ensuing, take up this book. The scene is at Achilles's tent on the sea-shore, from whence it changes to the palace of Vulcan.*



THE  
EIGHTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ILLIAD.

**T**HUS like the rage of fire the combat burns,  
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.  
Meanwhile, where Hellefpon's broad waters flow,  
Stood Nestor's son, the messenger of woe :  
There sat Achilles, shaded by his sails,  
On hoisted yards extended to the gales ;  
Penive he sat ; for all that fate design'd  
Rose in sad prospect to his boding mind. 5

v. 1. *Thus like the rage of fire, &c.]* This phrase is usual in our author, to signify a sharp battle fought with heat and fury on both parts ; such an engagement like a flame, preying upon all sides, and dying the sooner, the fiercer it burns. *Eustathius.*

v. 6. *On hoisted yards.]* The epithet ἐξεναγέων in this place has a more than ordinary signification. It implies that the sail-yards were hoisted up, and Achilles's ships on the point to set sail. This shews that it was purely in compliance to his friend that he permitted him to succour the Greeks ; he meant to leave them as soon as Patroclus returned ; he still remembered what he told the embassa-



## 188 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Thus to his soul he said. Ah ! what constrains  
The Greeks, late victors, now to quit the plains ?  
Is this the day, which Heav'n so long ago      11  
Ordain'd, to sink me with the weight of woe ?'  
(So Thetis warn'd) when by a Trojan hand  
The bravest of the Myrmidonian band  
Should lose the light ? Fulfill'd is that decree ; 15  
Fall'n is the warriour, and Patroclus he !

dors in the ninth book, v. 360 of the original. *To-mor-*  
*row you shall see my fleet sail.* Accordingly this is the day  
appointed, and he is fixed to his resolution : this cir-  
cumstance wonderfully strengthens his implacable cha-  
racter.

v. 7. *Pensive he sat.]* Homer in this artful manner  
prepares Achilles for the fatal message, and gives him  
these forebodings of his misfortunes, that they might be  
no less than he expected.

His expressions are suitable to his concern, and deli-  
vered confusedly. " I bad him (says he) after h<sup>t</sup> had  
" saved the ships, and repulsed the Trojans, to return  
" back, and not engage himself too far." Here he  
breaks off, when he should have added ; " But he was so  
" unfortunate as to forget my advice." As he is reason-  
ing with himself, Antilochus comes in, which makes him  
leave the sense imperfect. *Eustathius.*

v. 15. — — — *Fulfill'd is that decree ;*  
*Slain is the warriour, and Patrocl... ne !]*

It may be objected, that Achilles seems to contradict  
what had been said in the foregoing book, that Thetis  
concealed from her son the death of Patroclus in her  
prediction. Whereas here he says, that she had foretold  
he should lose the bravest of the Thessalians. There is  
nothing in this but what is natural and common among



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 189

In vain I charg'd him soon to quit the plain,  
And warn'd to shun Hectorean force in vain !

Thus while he thinks, Antilochus appears,  
And tells the melancholy tale with tears. 20  
Sad tidings, son of Peleus ! thou must hear ;  
And wretched I, th' unwilling messenger !  
Dead is Patroclus ! For his corse they fight ;  
His naked corse ; his arms are Hector's right.

mankind : and it is still more agreeable—the hasty and inconsiderate temper of Achilles, not to have made that reflection till it was too late. Prophecies are only marks of divine prescience, not warnings to prevent human misfortunes ; for if they were, they must hinder their own accomplishment.

v. 21. *Sad tidings, son of Peleus !*] This speech of Antilochus, & ought to serve as a model for the brevity with which so dreadful a piece of news ought to be delivered ; for in two verses it comprehends the whole affair of the death of Patroclus, the person that killed him, the contest for his body, and his arms in the possession of his enemy. Besides, it should be observed that grief has so crowded his words, that in these two verses he leaves the verb ἀμφιμάχονται, *they fight*, without its nominative, *the Greeks or Trojans*. Homer observes this brevity upon all the like occasions. The Greek tragick poets have not always imitated this discretion. In great distresses there is nothing more ridiculous than a messenger who begins a long story with pathetick descriptions ; he speaks without being heard ; for the person to whom he addresses himself has no time to attend him : the first word, which discovers to him his misfortune, has made him deaf to all the rest. *Eustathius.*



## 190 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

A sudden horrour shot thro' all the chief, 25  
And wrapt his senses in the cloud of grief;

v. 25. *A fudaen horrour, &c.*] A modern French writer has drawn a parallel of the conduct of Homer and Virgil, in relation to the deaths of Patroclus and of Pallas. The latter is killed by Turnus, as the former by Hector; Turnus triumphs in the spoils of the one, as Hector is clad in the arms of the other; Æneas revenges the death of Pallas by that of Turnus, as Achilles the death of Patroclus by that of Hector. The grief of Achilles in Homer, on the ~~more~~ of Patroclus, is much greater than that of Æneas in Virgil for the sake of Pallas. Achilles gives himself up to despair, with a weakness which Plato could not pardon in him, and which can only be excused on account of the long and close friendship between them: that of Æneas is more discreet, and seems more worthy of a hero. It was not possible that Æneas could be so deeply interested for any man, as Achilles was interested for Patroclus: for Virgil had no colour to kill Ascanius, who was little more than a child; besides that, his hero's interest in the war of Italy ~~was~~ great enough of itself, not to need to be animated by so touching a concern as the fear of losing his son. On the other hand, Achilles having but very little personal concern in the war of Troy (as he had told Agamemnon in the beginning of the poem) and knowing, besides, that he was to perish there; required some very pressing motive to engage him to persist in it, after such disgusts and insults as he had received. It was this which made it necessary for these two great poets to treat a subject so much in its own nature alike, in a manner so different. But as Virgil found it admirable in Homer, he was willing to approach it, as near as the œconomy of his work would permit.



## Book XVIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 191

Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread  
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head ;  
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,  
These he deforms with dust, and these he tears : 30  
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,  
And roll'd and grovel'd, as to earth he grew.  
The virgin captives, with disorder'd charms,  
(Won by his own, or by Patroclus' arms)  
Rush'd from the tents with cries ; and gath'ring  
round, 35  
Beat their white breasts, and fainted on the ground :  
While Nestor's son sustains a manlier part,  
And mourns the warriour with a warriour's heart ;

v. 27. *Cast on the ground, &c.*] This is a fine picture of the grief of Achilles. We see on the one hand, the posture in which the hero receives the news of his friend's death ; he falls upon the ground, he rends his hair, he snatches the ashes and casts them on his head, according to the "manner" of those times ; (but what much enlivens it in this place, is his sprinkling embers, instead of ashes, in the violence of his passion.) On the other side, the captives are running from their tents, ranging themselves about him, and answering to his groans : beside him stands Antilochus, fetching deep sighs, and hanging on the arms of the hero, for fear his despair and rage should cause some desperate attempt upon his own life : there is no painter but will be touched with this image.

v. 33. *The virgin captives*] The captive maids lamented either in pity for their lord, or in gratitude to the memory of Patroclus, who was remarkable for his goodness and affability ; or under these pretences mourned for their own misfortunes and slavery. *Eustathius.*



192 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XVIII.

Hangs on his arms, amidst his frantick woe,  
And oft prevents the meditated blow. 40

Far in the deep abysses of the main,  
With hoary Nereus, and the wat'ry train,  
The Mother Goddess from her crystal throne  
Heard his loud cries, and answer'd groan for groan.  
The circling Nereids with their mistress weep, 45  
And all the sea-green sisters of the deep.

Thalia, Glauce, (ev'ry wat'ry name)  
Nesaea mild, and silver Spio came :  
Cymothoë and Cymodoce were nigh,  
And the blue languish of soft Alia's eye. 50

Their locks Actaea and Limnoria rear,  
Then Proto, Doris, Panope appear,  
Thoa, Pherusa, Doto, Melita ;  
Agave gentle, and Amphithoë gay :  
Next Callianira, Callianassa show 55

Their sister looks ; Dexamene the slow,  
And swift Dynamene, now cut the tides  
Iæra now the verdant wave divides :

Nemertes with Apseudes lifts the head,  
Bright Galatea quits her pearly bed ;  
These Orythia, Clymene, attend,  
Næra, Amphinome, the train extend.  
And black Janira, and Janassa fair,  
And Amatheia with her amber hair. 60

All these, and all that deep in ocean held  
Their sacred seats, the glim'mring grotto fill'd ;  
Each beat her iv'ry breast with silent woe,  
'Till Thetis' sorrows thus began to flow. 65



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 193

Hear me, and judge, ye Sisters of the main !  
How just a cause has Thetis to complain ? 70  
How wretched, were I mortal, were my fate !  
How more than wretched in th' immortal state !  
Sprung from my bed a god-like hero came,  
The bravest far that ever bore the name ;  
Like some fair olive, by my careful hand 75  
He grew, he flourish'd, and adorn'd the land :  
To Troy I sent him ; but the Fates ordain  
He never, never must return again.  
So short a space the light of heav'n to view,  
So short alas ! and fill'd with anguish too. 80  
Hear how his sorrows echo thro' the shore !  
I cannot ease them, but I must deplore ;  
I go at least to bear a tender part,  
And mourn my lov'd-one with a mother's heart.  
She said, and left the caverns of the main, 85  
All bath'd in tears ; the melancholy train  
Attend her way. Wide-opening part the tides,  
While the long pomp the silver wave divides.  
Approaching now, they touch'd the Trojan land ;  
Then, two by two, ascended up the strand. 90

v. 75. *Like some fair olive, by my careful hand.*] This passage, where the mother compares her son to a tender plant, reared and preserved with care ; has a most remarkable resemblance to that in the Psalms, *Thy children like branches of olive-trees round thy table.* Psalm cxxvii.



## 194 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Th' immortal Mother, standing close beside  
Her mournful offspring, to his sighs reply'd ;  
Along the coast their mingled clamours ran,  
And thus the silver-footed Dame began. 94

Why mourns my son ? thy late preferr'd request  
The God has granted, and the Greeks distrest :  
Why mourns my son ? thy anguish let me share,  
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.

He, deeply groaning—To this cureless grief  
Not e'en the Thund'rer's favour brings relief. 100  
Patroclus—Ah !—say, Goddess can I boast  
A pleasure now ? revenge itself is lost ;  
Patroclus, lov'd of all my martial train,  
Beyond mankind, beyond myself, is slain ! 104  
Lost are those arms the Gods themselves bestow'd  
On Peleus ; Hector bears the glorious load.

v. 100, 125. *The two speeches of Achilles & Thetis.]* It is not possible to imagine more lively and beautiful strokes of nature and passion, than those which our author ascribes to Achilles throughout these admirable speeches. They contain all, that the truest friend, the most tender son, and the most generous hero, could think or express in this delicate and affecting circumstance. He shews his excess of love to his mother, by wishing he had never been born or known to the world, rather than he should have endured so many sufferings on his account: he shews no less love for his friend, in resolving to revenge his death upon Hector, though his own would immediately follow. We see him here ready to meet his fate for the sake of his friend, and in the Odyssey we find him wishing to live again, only to maintain his father's honour against his enemies. Thus he values neither life nor



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 195

Curs'd be that day, when all the Pow'rs above  
Thy charms submitted to a mortal love :  
Oh had'st thou still, a sister of the main,  
Purſi'd the pleasures of the wat'ry reign ; 110  
And happier Peleus, less ambitious, led  
A mortal beauty to his equal bed !  
E'er the sad fruit of thy unhappy womb  
Had caus'd such sorrows past, and woes to come.  
For soon alas ! that wretched offspring slain, 115  
New woes, new sorrows shall create again.  
'Tis not in Fate th' alternate now to give ;  
Patroclus dead, Achilles hates to live.  
Let me revenge it on proud Hector's heart,  
Let his last spirit smoke upon my dart ; 120  
On these conditions will I breathe : 'till then,  
I blush to walk among the race of men.

death, but as they conduce to the good of his friend and parents, or the encrease of his glory.

After having calmly considered the present state of his life, he deliberately embraces his approaching fate ; and comforts himself under it, by a reflection on those great men, whom neither their illustrious actions, nor their affinity to heaven, could save from the general doom. A thought very natural to him, whose business it was in peace to sing their praises, and in war to imitate their actions. Achilles, like a man passionate of glory, takes none but the best models ; he thinks of Hercules, who was the son of Jupit', and who had filled the universe with the noise of his immortal actions : these are the sentiments of a real hero. *Eustathius.*



## 196 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

A flood of tears, at this, the Goddess shed,  
Ah then, I see thee dying, see thee dead !  
When Hector falls, thou dy'st,—Let Hector die,  
And let me fall ! (Achilles made reply)      120  
Far lies Patroclus from his native plain !  
He fell, and falling, wish'd my aid in vain.  
Ah then, since from this miserable day  
I cast all hope of my return away,      130  
Since unreveng'd, a hundred ghosts demand  
The fate of Hector from Achilles' hand ;  
Since here, for brutal courage far renown'd,  
I live an idle burden to the ground,  
(Others in council fam'd for nobler skill,      135  
More useful to preserve, than I to kill)  
Let me—But oh ! ye gracious Pow'rs above !  
Wrath and revenge from men and Gods remove :

v. 137. *Let me—But oh ! ye gracious pow'rs, &c.]* Achilles's words are these : “ Now since I am never to return home, and since I lie here an useless person, losing my best friend, and exposing the Greeks to so many dangers by my own folly ; I who am superiour to 'm in all in battle”—Here he breaks off, and says—“ May contention perish everlastingily, &c.” Achilles leaves the sentence thus suspended, either because in his h. at he had forgot what he was speaking of, or because h. did not know how to end it ; for he shd have said, ‘ Since I have done all this, I will perish o reveng hin :’ Nothing can be finer than this sudden execration against discord and revenge, which breaks from the hero in the deep sense of the miseries those passions had occasioned.

Achilles could not be ignorant that he was superiour to others in battle ; and it was therefore no fault in him to



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 197

Far, far too dear to ev'ry mortal breast,  
Sweet to the soul, as honey to the taste ; 140  
Gath'ring like vapours of a noxious kind  
'ro'ri fiery blood, and dark'ning all the mind.  
Me Agamemnon urg'd to deadly hate ;  
'Tis past—I quell it ; I resign to fate.  
Yes—I will meet the murd'rer of my friend : 145  
Or (if the Gods ordain it) meet my end.  
The stroke of fate the bravest cannot shun ;  
The great Alcides, Jove's unequall'd son,  
To Juno's hate at length resign'd his breath,  
And funk the victim of all-conq'ring death. 150  
So shall Achilles fall ! stretch'd pale and dead,  
No more the Grecian hope, or Trojan dread !  
Let me, this instant, rush into the fields,  
And reap what glory life's short harvest yields.  
Shall I not force some widow'd dame to tear 155  
With frantick hands her long dishevell'd hair ?

sav so. But ne is so ingenuous as to give himself no farther commendation than what he undoubtedly merited ; confessing at the same time, that many exceeded him in speakir ; unless one may take this as said in contempt of oratory, not unlike that of Virgil,

Et abundat carissas melius—&c.

v. 1,3. *Le me, thi instant.*] I shall have time enough for ir\_ous rest when I am in the grave, but now I must act like a living hero : I shall indeed lie down in death, but at the same time rise higher in glory. *Eysta-*



198 HOMER'S ILIAD Book XVIII.

Shall I not force her breast to heave with sighs,  
And the soft tears to trickle from her eyes ?  
Yes, I shall give the fair those mournful charms-  
In vain, you hold me — Hence ! my arms, : my  
arms !

160

Soon shall the sanguine torrent spread so wide,  
That all shall know, Achilles swells the tide.

My son (Cœrulean Thetis made reply,  
To fate submitting with a secret sigh)  
The host to succour, and thy friends to save, 165  
Is worthy thee ; the duty of the brave.  
But can't thou, naked, issue to the plains ?  
Thy radiant arms the Trojan foe detains.  
Insulting Hector bears the spoils on high,  
But vainly glories, for his fate is nigh. 170  
Yet, yet awhile, thy gen'rous ardour stay ;  
Assur'd, I meet thee at the dawn of day,

v. 162. *That all shall know, Achilles]* There is a great stress on δηρὸν and οἶων. They shall soon find that their victories have been owing to the long absence of a hero, and that hero Achilles. Upon which the ancients have observed, that since Achilles's anger there past in reality but a few days : to which it may be replied, that o short a time as this might well seem long to Achilles, who thought all unactive hours to be useless and insupportable ; and if the poet himself has said that Achilles was long absent, he had not said it because a great man, &c., had past, but because so great a variety of incidents had happened in that time. *Eustathius.*

v. 171. — This promise of Thetis to present her son with a suit of armour, was the most artful method of



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILLIAD. 199

Charg'd with resplendent arms (a glorious load)

  ■alcanian arms, the labour of a God.

Then turning to the daughters of the main, 175

'he Goddess thus dismiss'd her azure train.

Ye sister Nereids ! to your deeps descend ;  
Haste, and our father's sacred seat attend ;  
I go to find the architect divine,  
Where vast Olympus' starry summits shine : 180  
So tell our hoary sire—This charge she gave :  
The sea-green sisters plunge beneath the wave :  
Thetis once more ascends the blest abodes,  
And treads the brazen threshold of the Gods.

And now the Greeks, from furious Hector's force,  
Urge to broad Hellespont their headlong course : 186  
Nor yet their chiefs Patroclus' body bore  
Safe thro' the tempest to the tented shore.

't he horse, the foot, with equal fury join'd,  
Pour'd on the rear, and thunder'd close behind ; 190  
And like a flame thro' fields of ripen'd corn,  
The rage of Hector o'er the ranks was borne.

Thri' the slain hero by the foot he drew ;  
Thrice o the skies the Trojan clamours flew :  
As oft h' Ajaces his assault sustain ; 195  
But che 'd he turns ; repuls'd, attacks again.

hindering him from putting immediately in practice his resolution of fighting, which according to his violent manners, he must have done : therefore the interposition of Thetis here was absolutely necessary ; it was *dignus amicorum nodus.*



200 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XVIII.

With fiercer shouts his ling'ring troops he fires,  
Nor yields a step, nor from his post retires ;  
So watchful shepherds strive to force, in vain,  
The hungry lion from a carcase slain.      20

Ev'n yet Patroclus had he borne away,  
And all the glories of th' extended day :  
Had not high Juno, from the realms of air,  
Secret, dispatch'd her trusty messenger.

The various Goddess of the show'ry bow,      205  
Shot in a whirlwind to the shore below ;  
To great Achilles at his ships she came,  
And thus began the many-colour'd dame.

Rise, son of Peleus ! rise divinely brave !  
Affist the combat, and Patroclus save :      210

For him the slaughter to the fleet they spread,  
And fall by mutual wounds around the dead.  
To drag him back to Troy the foe contends :  
Nor with his death the rage of Hector ends :

A prey to dogs he dooms the corse to lie,      215  
And marks the place to fix his head on high.

Rise, and prevent (if yet you think of fame)  
Thy friend's disgrace, thy own eternal shame !

Who sends thee, Goddess ! from th' etheri<sup>n</sup> skies ?  
Achilles thus. And Iris thus replies.      220

v. 219. Who sends thee, Goddess, &c.] Achilles is amazed, that a moment after the Goddess, his mother, had forbid him fighting, he should receive a contrary order from the Gods : therefore he asks what God sent her ? *Dacier.*



## Book XVIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 201

I come, Pelides ! from the Queen of Jove,  
The immortal Empress of the realms above ;  
Unknown to him who sits remote on high,  
Unknown to all the synod of the sky. 224

Thou com'st in vain, he cries (with fury warm'd)  
Arms I have none, and can I fight unarm'd ?  
Unwilling as I am, of force I stay,  
'Till Thetis bring me at the dawn of day  
Vulcanian arms : what other can I wield ?  
Except the mighty Telamonian shield ? 230

v. 226. *Arms I have none.*] It is here objected against Homer, that since Patroclus took Achilles's armour, Achilles could not want arms since he had those of Patroclus ; but (besides that Patroclus might have given his armour to his squire Automedon, the better to deceive the Trojans by making them take Automedon for Patroclus, as they took Patroclus for Achilles) this objection may be very solidly answered by saying that Homer has prevented it, since he made Achilles's armour fit Patroclus's body not without a miracle, which the Gods wrought in his favour. Furthermore it does not follow, that because the armour of a large man fits one that is smaller, the armour of a little man should fit one that is larger. *Eustathius.*

v. 230. *Except the mighty Telamonian shield.*] Achilles seems not to have been so large a stature as Ajax : yet his shield it is likely might not be fit enough for him, because his strength was sufficient to wield it. This passage, I think, might have been made use of by the defenders of the shield of Achilles against the criticks, to shew that Homer intended the buckler of his hero for a very large one : and one would think he put it into this



202 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

That, in my friend's defence, has Ajax spread,  
While his strong lance around him heaps the dead :  
The gallant chief defends Menœtius' son,  
And does, what his Achilles' should have done.

Thy want of arms (said Iris) well we know, 235  
But tho' unarm'd, yet clad in terrors, go !  
Let but Achilles o'er yon' trench appear ;  
Proud Troy shall tremble, and consent to fear :

place, just a little before the description of that shield, on purpose to obviate that objection.

v. 236. *But tho' unarm'd.]* A hero so violent and so outrageous as Achilles, and who had but just lost the man he loved best in the world, is not likely to refuse shewing himself to the enemy, for the single reason of having no armour. Grief and despair in a great soul are not so prudent and reserved ; but then on the other side, he is not to throw himself into the midst of so many enemies armed and flushed with victory. Homer gets out of this nice circumstance with great dexterity, and gives to Achilles's character every thing he ought to give to it, without offending either against reason or probability. He judiciously feigns, that Juno sent this order to Achilles, for Juno is the goddess of royalty, who has care of princes and kings ; and who inspires them with the sense of what they owe to their dignity and character. *Dacier.*

v. 237. *Let but Achilles o'er , trench appear.]* There cannot be a greater instance, how constant Homer carried his whole design in his head, as well as what admirable art he raises one great idea upon another, to the highest sublime, than this passage of Achilles's appearance to the army, and the preparations by which are led to it. In the thirteenth book, when the Trojans



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 203

Greece from one glance of that tremendous eye,  
Shall take new courage, and disdain to fly. 240

She spoke, and past in air. The hero rose ;  
Her Aegis, Pallas o'er his shoulder throws ;  
Around his brows a golden cloud she spread ;  
A stream of glory flam'd above his head.  
As when from some beleaguer'd town arise 245  
The smokes, high-curling to the shaded skies ;  
(Seen from some island, o'er the main afar,  
When men distrest hang out the sign of war)

have the victory, they check their pursuit of it with the thought that Achilles *sees them* : in the sixteenth, they are put into the utmost consternation at the sight of his armour and chariot : in the seventeenth, Menelaus and Ajax are in despair, on the consideration that Achilles cannot succour them for want of armour : in the present v. 246, Beyond all expectation he does but shew himself unarmed, and the very sight of him gives the victory to Greece ! How extremely noble is this gradation !

v. 246. *The smokes, high-curling.*] For fires in the day appear nothing but smoke, and in the night flames are visible because of the darkness. And thus it is said in Exodus, That God led his people in the day with a pillar of smoke, and in the night with a pillar of fire. *Per diem . . columnā nubis, & per noctem in columnā ignis.* Dacier.

v. 247. *Seen from some land.*] Homer makes choice of a town ; placed in an island, because such a place being besieged has no other means of making its distress known than by signals of fire ; whereas a town upon the continent has other means to make known to its neighbours the necessity it is in. Dacier.



204 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Soon as the sun in ocean hides his rays, 249  
Thick on the hills the flaming beacons blaze ;  
With long-projected beams the seas are bright,  
And Heav'n's high arch reflects the ruddy light :  
So from Achilles' head the splendours rise,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze against the skies. 254  
Forth march'd the chief, and distant from the croud,  
High on the rampart rais'd his voice aloud ;  
With her own shout Minerva swells the sound ;  
Troy starts astonish'd, and the shores rebound.  
As the loud trumpet's brazen mouth from far  
With shrilling clangor sounds th' alarm of war, 260

v. 259. *As the loud trumpet's, &c.]* I have already observed, that when the poet speaks as from himself, he may be allowed to take his comparissons from things which were not known before his time. Here he borrow the comparison from the *trumpet*, as he has elsewhere done from *saddle-horses*, though neither one nor the other were used in Greece at the time of the Trojan war. Virgil was less exact in this respect ; for he describes the trumpet as used in the sacking of Troy :

"Exoritur clamorque virum clangorque tubum."

And celebrates Misenus as the trumpeter of Aeas. But as Virgil wrote at a time more remote from those heroick ages, perhaps this liberty may be excused. 'ut a poet may better confine himself to the customs and manners, like a painter ; and it is equally a fault in either of them to ascribe to times and nations any thing with which they were unacquainted.

One may add an observation to this note of M. Dacier, that the trumpet's not being in use at that time, makes very much for Homer's purpose in this place. The ter-



**Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 205**

Struck from the walls, the echoes float on high,  
And the round bulwarks and thick tow'rs reply ;  
So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd :  
Fists drop their arms, and trembled as they heard ;  
**And back the chariots roll, and coursers bound,** 265  
And steeds and men lie mingled on the ground.

Aghast they see the living lightnings play,  
And turn their eye-balls from the flashing ray.  
Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he rais'd ;  
**And thrice they fled, confounded and amaz'd.** 270  
Twelve in the tumult wedg'd, untimely rush'd  
On their own spears, by their own chariots crush'd :  
While shielded from the darts, the Greeks obtain  
The long-contended carcase of the slain.

A lofty bier the breathless warriour bears : 275  
**Around, his sad companions melt in tears.**  
But chief Achilles, bending down his head,  
Pours unavailing sorrows o'er the dead,  
Whom late triumphant with his steeds and car,  
He sent resplendent to the field of war ; 280  
(Unhappy change !) now senseless, pale, he found,  
Stretch'd forth, and gash'd with many a gaping  
wound.

Meant ~~unwearied~~ with his heav'nly way,  
In ocean's waves th' unwilling light of day

Was raised by the voice of this hero, is much the more  
strongly imaged by a sound that was unusual, and capa-  
ble of striking more from its very novelty.



206 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Quench'd his red orb, at Juno's high command,  
And from their labours eas'd th' Achaian band. 286  
The frighted Trojans (panting from the war,  
Their steeds unharness'd from the weary car)  
A sudden council call'd : each chief appear'd  
In haste, and standing ; for to fit they fear'd. 290  
'Twas now no season for prolong'd debate ;  
They saw Achilles, and in him their fate.  
Silent they stood : Polydamas at last,  
Skill'd to discern the future by the past,  
The son of Panthus thus express'd his fears ; 295  
(The friend of Hector, and of equal years :  
The self-same night to both a being gave,  
One wise in council, one in action brave.)

In free debate, my friends, your sentence speak ;  
For me, I move, before the morning break, 300  
To raise our camp : too dang'rous here our post,  
Far from Troy walls, and on a naked coast.  
I deem'd not Greece so dreadful, while engag'd  
In mutual feuds, her king and hero rag'd ;  
Then, while we hop'd our armies might prevai',  
We boldly camp'd beside a thousand sail. 306  
I dread Pelides now : his rage of mind  
Not long continues to the shores confin'd.  
Nor to the fields, where le... in equal fray  
Contending nations won and lost the day ; 310  
For Troy, for Troy, shall henceforth be the strife.  
And the hard contest not for fame, but life.  
Haste then to Ilion, while the sav'ring night  
Detains those terrors, keeps that arm from fight ;



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 207

If but the morrow's sun behold us here, 315

That arm, those terrors, we shall feel, not fear;

And hearts that now disdain, shall leap with joy,

If Heav'n permit them then to enter Troy.

Let not my fatal prophecy be true,

Nor what I tremble but to think, ensue.

320

Whatever be our fate, yet let us try

What force of thought and reason can supply;

Let us on counsel for our guard depend;

The town, her gates and bulwarks shall defend.

When morning dawns, our well appointed pow'rs,

Array'd in arms, shall line the lofty tow'rs.

326

Let the fierce hero then, when fury calls,

Vent his mad vengeance on our rocky walls,

Or fetch a thousand circles round the plain,

Till his spent coursers seek the fleet again:

330

So nay his rage be tir'd, and labour'd down;

Ard dogs shall tear him e'er he sack the town.

v. 315. *If but the morrow's sun, &c.]* Polydamas says in the original, "If Achilles comes to-morrow *in his armour.*" There seems to lie an objection against this passage, for Polydamas knew that Achilles's armour was won by Hector, he must also know that no other man's armour would fit him; how then could he know that new arms were made for him that very night? Those who are resolved to defend Homer, may answer, it was by his skill in prophecy; but to me this seems to be a slip of our author's memory, and one of those little *nods* which Horace speaks of.



## 208 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Return? (said Hector, fir'd with stern disdain)  
What coop whole armies in our walls again?  
Was't not enough, ye valiant warriours say, 3.  
Nine years imprison'd in those tow'rs ye lay?  
Wide o'er the world was Ilion fam'd of old  
For brass exhaustless, and for mines of gold:  
But while inglorious in her walls we stay'd,  
Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd;

v. 333. *The speech of Hector.*] Hector, in this severe answer to Polydamas, takes up several of his words and turns them another way.

Polydamas had said, Πρωὶ δὲ ἡτοῖς σὺν τεύχεσι θωρυχθέντες επομέθ' ἀντίβατον, “To-morrow by break of day let us put on our arms, and defend the castles and city walls;” to which Hector replies, Πρωὶ δὲ ἡτοῖς σὺν τεύχεσι θωρυχθέντες Νησοῖς ἵστη γλαφυρῶν ἐκέρομεν ὅξεν “Aga,” “To-morrow by break of day let us put on our arms, not to defend ourselves at home, but to fight the Greeks before their own ships.”

Polydamas, speaking of Achilles, had said, τῷ δὲ Αχιλλεῖ αἰτείει ληστήν, &c. “If he comes after we are in the walls of our city, it will be the worse for him, for he may drive round the city long enough before he can hit us.” To which Hector answers, If Achilles should come “Αλλα, αἰτεί ληστήν, τῷ δὲ ισσεται· καὶ μήτε φεύξαμεν ἐν τῷ νέφελῳ, &c.” “it will be the worse for him as you say, because I'll fight him:” καὶ μήτε φεύξαμεν, says Hector, in reply to Polydamas's saying, &c. But Hector is not so far gone in passion or pride, as to forget himself; and accordingly in the next lines he modestly puts it in doubt, which of them shall conquer. *Eupiathius.*

v. 340. *Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd.] As well by reason of the convoys, which were necessarily*



**Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD.** 209

The Phrygians now her scatter'd spoils enjoy, 341  
And proud Mæonia wastes the fruits of Troy.  
Great Jove at length my arms to conquest calls,  
And shuts the Grecians in their wooden walls :  
Dar'st thou dispirit whom the Gods incite ? 345  
Flies any Trojan ? I shall stop his flight.  
To better counsel then attention lend ;  
Take due refreshment, and the watch attend.  
If there be one whose riches cost him care,  
Forth let him bring them for the troops to share ; 350  
'Tis better gen'rously bestow'd on those,  
Than left the plunder of our country's foes.  
Soon as the morn the purple orient warms,  
Fierce on yon' navy will we pour our arms.  
If great Achilles rise in all his might, 355  
His be the danger : I shall stand the fight.

to be sent for with ready money ; as by reason of the great allowances which were to be given to the auxiliary troops, who came from Phrygia and Mæonia. Hector's meaning is, that since all the riches of Troy are exhausted, it is no longer necessary to spare themselves, or shut themselves up within their walls. *Dacier.*

v. 349. *If there be one, &c.]* This noble and generous proposal is worthy of Hector, and at the same time very artful to ingratiate himself with the soldiers. Eustathius farther observes, that it is laid with an eye to Polydamas, as accusing him of being rich, and of not opening the advice he had given, for any other reason than to preserve his great wealth ; for riches commonly make men cowards, and the desire of saving them has often occasioned men to give advice very contrary to the publick welfare.



210 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Honour, ye Gods ! or let me gain, or give ;  
And live he glorious, whosoe'er shall live !  
Mars is our common lord, alike to all ;  
And oft the victor triumphs, but to fall. 360

The shouting host in loud applause join'd :  
So Pallas robb'd the many of their mind ;  
To their own sense condemn'd, and left to chuse  
The worst advice, the better to refuse.

While the long Night extends her sable reign,  
Around Patroclus mourn'd the Grecian train. 366  
Stern in superiour grief Pelides stood ;  
Those slaught'ring arms, so us'd to bathe in blood,  
Now clasp his clay-cold limbs : then gushing start  
The tears, and sighs burst from his swelling heart.  
The lion thus, with dreadful anguish stung, 371  
Roars thro' the desart, and demands his young  
When the grim savage, to his rifled den  
Too late returning, snuffs the track of men,  
And o'er the vales and o'er the forest bounds ; 75  
His clam'rous grief the bellowing wood resounds.  
So grieves Achilles ; and impetuous, vents -  
To all his Myrmidons, his loud laments.

In what vain promise, Gods ! did I engage,  
When to console Menœtius' feeble age, 380

v. 379. *In what vain promise.*] The lamentation of Achilles over the body of Patroclus is exquisitely touched : it is sorrow in extreme, but it is the sorrow of Achilles. It is nobly ushered in by that simile of the grief of the lion ; an idea which is fully answered in the savage and bloody conclusion of this speech. One would think by



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 211

I vow'd his much-lov'd offspring to restore,  
Charg'd with rich spoils, to fair Opuntia's shore ?  
But mighty Jove cuts short, with just disdain,  
The long, long views of poor, designing man !  
One fate the warriour and the friend shall strike, 385  
And Troy's black sands must drink our blood alike :  
Me too, a wretched mother shall deplore,  
An aged father never see me more !  
Yet, my Patroclus ! yet a space I stay,  
Then swift pursue thee on the darksome way. 390  
E'er thy dear relicks in the grave are laid,  
Shall Hector's head be offer'd to thy shade ;  
*That*, with his arms, shall hang before thy shrine ;  
And twelve the noblest of the Trojan line,  
Sacred to vengeance, by this hand expire, 395  
*Their* lives effus'd around thy flaming pyre.  
Thi : let me lie 'till then ! thus, closely prest,  
Bati : thy cold face, and sob upon thy breast !  
While Trojan captives here thy mourners stay,  
Weep all the night, and murmur all the day : 400  
Spoils of my arms, and thine ; when, wasting wide,  
Our swords, kept time, and conquer'd side by side.

the beginning of it, that Achilles did not know his fate, till after his departure fr<sup>n</sup> Opantium ; and yet how does that agree with what is said of his choice of the short and active life, rather than the long and inglorious one ? Or did he not flatter himself sometimes, that his fate might be changed ? This may be conjectured from several other passages, and is indeed the most natural solution.



## 212 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

He spoke, and bid the sad attendants round  
Cleanse the pale corse, and wash each honour'd  
wound.

A maffy caldron of stupendous frame 405

They brought, and plac'd it o'er the rising flame:

Then heap the lighted wood; the flame divides

Beneath the vase, and climbs around the sides:

In its wide womb they pour the rushing stream;

The boiling water bubbles to the brim. 410

The body then they bathe with pious toil,

Embalm the wounds, anoint the limbs with oil,

High on a bed of state extended laid,

And decent cover'd with a linen shade; 414

Last o'er the dead the milk-white veil they threw;

That done, their sorrows and their sighs renew.

Meanwhile to Juno, in the realms above,  
(His wife and sister) spoke almighty Jove.

At last thy will prevails: great Peleus' son 419

Rises in arms: such grace thy Greeks have won

v. 404. *Cleanse the pale corse, &c.]* This custom of washing the dead is continued among the Greeks to this day; and it is a pious duty performed by the nearest friend or relation, to see it washed and anointed with a perfume, after which they cover it with linen exactly in the manner here related.

- v. 417. *Jupiter and Juno.]* Virgil has copied the speech of Jupiter and Juno. *Af ego qua: vum incedo regina, &c.* But it is exceeding remarkable, that Homer should upon every occasion make marriage and discord inseparable; it is an unalterable rule with him, to introduce the husband and wife in a quarrel.



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 213

Say (for I know not) is their race divine,  
And thou the mother of that martial line?

What words are these (th' imperial Dame replies,  
While anger flash'd from her majestick eyes)  
Succeour like this a mortal arm might lend, 425  
And such success mere human wit attend:  
And shall not I, the second Pow'r above,  
Heav'n's Queen, and consort of the thund'ring Jove,  
Say, shall not I, one nation's fate command, 429  
Not wreak my vengeance on one guilty land?

So they. Meanwhile the silver-footed dame  
Reach'd the Vulcanian dome, eternal frame!  
High-eminent amid the works divine,  
Where Heav'n's far-beaming brazen mansions shine.  
There the lame architect the Goddess found, 435  
Oh! ~~far~~ in smoke, his forges flaming round,  
While bath'd in sweat from fire to fire he flew;  
And puffing loud, the roaring bellows blew.  
That day no common task his labour claim'd:  
Full twenty tripods for his hall he fram'd, 440

v. 440. *Full twenty tripods.*] Tripods were vessels supported on three feet, with handles on the sides; they were of several kinds and for several uses; some were consecrated to sacrifices, some used as tables, some as seats, others hung up as ornaments on walls of houses or temples; these of Vulcan have an addition of wheels, which was not usual, which intimates them to be made with clock-work. M<sup>o</sup>. Dacier has commented very well on this passage. If Vulcan (says he) had made ordinary tripods, they had not answered the greatness, power, and skill of a God. It was therefore necessary that this work



## 214 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

That plac'd on living wheels of massy gold,  
(Wond'rous to tell) instinct with spirit roll'd

should be above that of men : to effect this, the tripods were animated, and in this Homer doth not deviate from the probability ; for every one is fully persuaded that a God can do things more difficult than these, and that all matter will obey him. What has not been said of the statues of Dædalus ? Plato writes, that they walked alone, and if they had not taken care to tie them, they would have got loose, and rush from their master. If a writer in prose can speak hyperbolically of a man, may not Homer do it much more of a God ? Nay, this circumstance with which Homer has embellished his poem, would have had nothing too surprising though these tripods had been made by a man ; for what may not be done in clock-work by an exact management of springs ? This criticism is then ill grounded, and Homer does not deserve the ridicule they would cast on him.

The same author applies to this passage of Homer that rule of Aristotle, Poetic. chap. xxvi. which deserve to be alledged at large on this occasion.

" When a poet is accused of saying any thing tha' is " impossible, we must examine that impossibility, either " with respect to *poetry*, with respect to that w' ch is " best, or with respect to *common fame*. First, with regard " to *poetry*. The *probable impossible* ought to be preferred " to the *possible* which hath no *verisimilitude*, and which " would not be believed ; and it is thus that *Zeuſis* " painted his pieces. Secondly, with respect to that " which is *best*, we see that a thing is more excellent and " more wonderful this way, and that the originals ought " always to surpass. Lastly, in r' t to *fame*, it is " proved that the poet need only follow a common opi- " nion. All that appears absurd may be also justified by " one of these three ways ; or else by the maxim we have



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 215

From place to place, around the blest abodes,  
Self-mov'd, obedient to the beck of Gods :  
For their fair handles now, o'erwrought with  
flow'rs,

44

In molds prepar'd, the glowing ore he pours.  
Just as responsive to his thought the frame,  
Stood prompt to move, the azure Goddess came :  
Charis, his spouse, a grace divinely fair,  
(With purple fillets round her braided hair) 450  
Observ'd her ent'ring ; her soft hand she press'd,  
And smiling, thus the wat'ry Queen address'd.

What, Goddess ! this unusual favour draws ?  
All hail, and welcome ! whatsoe'er the cause :  
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour 455  
Approach, and taste the dainties of the bow'r.

High on a throne, with stars of silver grac'd,  
And various artifice, the Queen she plac'd ;  
A footstool at her feet ; then calling, said,  
Ulcān draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid. 460

" already laid down, that it is probable, that a great many  
" things may happen against probability."

A late critick has taken notice of the conformity of this passage of Homer with that in the first chapter of Ezekiel, *The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels : when those went, they went ; and when those stood, these stood ; and when those were lifted up, the wheels were lifted up over against them ; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.*

v. 455. *a footstool at her feet.]* It is at this day the usual honour paid among the Greeks, to visitors of superior quality, to set them higher than the rest of the company,



## 216 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Thetis (reply'd the God) our pow'rs may claim,  
An ever-dear, an ever-honour'd name !

and put a footstool under their feet. See note on v. 179.  
Book xiv. This, with innumerable other customs, are  
still preserved in the eastern nations.

v. 460. *Vulcan draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid.]* The story the ancients tell of Plato's application of this verse, is worth observing. That great philosopher had in his youth a strong inclination to poetry, and not being satisfied to compose little pieces of gallantry and amour, he tried his force in tragedy and epick poetry; but the success was not answerable to his hopes: he compared his performance with that of Homer, and was very sensible of the difference. He therefore abandoned a sort of writing wherein at best he could only be the second, and turned his views to another, wherein he despaired not to become the first. His anger transported him so far, as to cast all his verses into the fire. But while he was burning them, he could not help citing a verse of the very poet who had caused his chagrin. It was the present line, which Homer has put into the mouth of Charis, where Thetis demands arms for Achilles;

"Ηφαίστε, πρόμεν' αὐτε, Θέτις νῦ τι Κεῖο χαλίζει.

Plato only inserted his own name instead of that of Thetis.

*Vulcan draw near, 'tis Plato asks your aid.*

If we credit the ancients, it was the discontentment in his own poetry gave him, that raised in him all the indignation he afterwards expressed against the art itself. In which (say they) he behaved like those lovers, who speak ill of the beauties whom they cannot vail upon. *Fraguier, Parall. de Hom. & de Platon.*

v. 461. *Thetis (reply'd the God) our pow'rs may claim, &c.]* Vulcan throws by his work to perform Thetis's



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 217

When my proud mother hurl'd me from the sky,  
(My awkward form, it seems, displeas'd her eye)

request, who had laid former obligations upon him ; the poet in this example giving us an excellent precept, that gratitude should take place of all other concerns.

The motives which should engage a God in a new work in the night-time upon a suit of armour for a mortal, ought to be strong : and therefore artfully enough put upon the foot of gratitude : besides, they afford at the same time a noble occasion for Homer to retail his theology, which he is always very fond of.

The allegory of Vulcan, or fire (according to Heraclides) is this. His father is Jupiter, or the Aether, his mother Juno, or the Air, from whence he fell to us, whether by lightning, or otherwise. He is said to be lame, that is, to want support, because he cannot subsist without the continual subsistence of fuel. The æthereal fire Homer calls Sol or Jupiter, the inferiour Vulcan ; the one wants nothing of perfection, the other is subject to decay, and is restored by accession of materials. Vulcan is said to fall from Heaven, because at first, when the opportunity of obtaining fire was not so frequent, men prepared instruments of brass, by which they collected the beams of the sun ; or else they gained it from accidental lightning, that set fire to some combustible matter. Vulcan had perished when he fell from Heaven, unless Thetis and Eurynome had received him ; that is, unless he had been preserved by falling into some convenient receptacle, subterranean place ; and so was afterwards distributed for the common necessities of mankind. To understand these strange explications, it must be known that Thetis is θέτειν from τίθημι, to lay up, and Eurynome from εὐρύς and νόμος, a wide distribution. They are all called daughters of the ocean, because the vapours and



218 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

**She, and Eurynome, my griefs redrest,** 465  
**And soft receiv'd me on their silver breast.**  
**Ev'n then, these arts employ'd my infant thought ;**  
**Chains, bracelets, pendants, all their toys I wrought.**  
**Nine years kept secret in the dark abode,**  
**Secure I lay conceal'd from man and God :** 470  
**Deep in a cavern'd rock my days were led ;**  
**The rushing ocean murmur'd o'er my head.**  
**Now since her presence glads our mansion, say,**  
**For such desert what service can I pay ?**  
**Vouchsafe, O Thetis ! at our board to share** 475  
**The genial rites, and hospitable fare ;**  
**While I the labours of the forge forego,**  
**And bid the roaring bellows cease to blow.**

Then from his anvil the lame artist rose ;  
Wide with distorted legs oblique he goes, 480  
And stills the bellows, and (in order laid)  
Locks in their chests his instruments of trade.  
Then with a sponge the sooty workman drest  
His brawny arms imbrown'd, and hairy breast.  
With his huge sceptre grac'd, and red attire, 485  
Came halting forth the Sov'reign of the fire :  
The monarch's steps two female forms uphold,  
That mov'd, and breath'd, in animated gold :

exhalations of the sea forming themselves into clouds, find nourishment for lightnings.

v. 488. — — — — two female, ..

*That mov'd and breath'd in animated gold.*

It is very probable that Homer took the idea of these from the statues of Dædalus, which might be extant in his



**Book XVIII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 219**

**To whom was voice, and sense, and science giv'n  
Of works divine (such wonders are in heav'n !) 490  
On these supported, with unequal gait,  
He reach'd the throne where pensive Thetis sat ;  
There plac'd beside her on the shining frame,  
He thus address'd the silver-footed dame.**

**Thee, welcome Goddess ! what occasion calls,  
(So long a stranger) to these honour'd walls ? 496  
'Tis thine, fair Thetis, the command to lay,  
And Vulcan's joy and duty to obey.**

**To whom the mournful mother thus replies,  
(The crystal drops stood trembling in her eyes) 500  
Oh Vulcan ! say, was ever breast divine  
So pierc'd with sorrows, so o'erwhelm'd as mine ?  
Of all the Goddesses, did Jove prepare  
~~Eu-~~Thetis only such a weight of care ?  
I only I, of all the wat'ry race, 505  
I y force subjected to a man's embrace,  
Who, sinking now with age and sorrow, pays  
The mighty fine impos'd on length of days.  
Sprung from my bed, a god-like hero came,  
The bravest sure that ever bore the name ; 510**

**time. The ancients tell us, they were made to imitate life, in moving their eyes, and in all other motions. From whence indeed it should seem, that the excellency of Dædalus consisted in what we call clock-work, or the management of moving figures by springs, rather than in sculpture or industry : and accordingly, the fable of his fitting wings to himself and his son, is formed entirely upon the foundation of the former.**



220 M O M E R's I L I A D. Book XVIII.

Like some fair plant beneath my careful hand  
He grew, he flourish'd, and he grac'd the land :  
To Troy I sent him ! but his native shore  
Never, ah never, shall receive him more ;  
(Ev'n while he lives, he wastes with secret woe)  
Nor I, a Goddess, can retard the blow !  
Robb'd of the prize, the Grecian suffrage gave,  
The king of nations forc'd his royal slave :  
For this be griev'd ; and 'till the Greeks opprest,  
Requir'd his arm, he sorrow'd unredrest. 520  
Large gifts they promise, and their elders send ;  
In vain—He arms not, but permits his friend  
His arms, his steeds, his forces to employ ;  
He marches, combats, almost conquers Troy.  
Then slain by Phœbus (Hector had the name) 525  
At once resigns his armour, life, and fame.

v. 517. *Robb'd of the prize, &c.]* Thetis, to compa  
her design, recounts every thing to the advantage of he  
son ; she therefore suppresses the episode of the embas/  
the prayers that had been made use of to move him,  
all that the Greeks had suffered after the return of the  
embassadors ; and artfully puts together two very distant  
things, as if they had followed each other in the same  
moment. He declined, says she, to succour the Greeks,  
but he sent Patroclus. Now between his refusing to help  
the Greeks, and his sending Patroclus terrible things  
had fallen out ; but she suppresses ther., for fear of offend  
ing Vulcan with the recital of Ach' l's inflexible obdura  
racy, and thereby create in that God a . . version to her  
son. *Eustathius.*

v. 525. *Then slain by Phœbus (Hector had the name).]* It  
is a passage worth taking notice of, that Brütus said to



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 221

But thou, in pity, by my pray'r be won :  
Grace with immortal arms this short-liv'd son,  
And to the field in martial pomp restore,  
To shine with glory, 'till he shines no more ! 530

To her the Artist-god. Thy griefs resign,  
~~Sect're~~, what Vulcan can, is ever thine.

O could I hide him from the Fates as well,  
Or with these hands the cruel stroke repel,  
As I shall forge most envy'd arms, the gaze 535  
Of wond'ring ages, and the world's amaze !

Thus having said, the Father of the fires  
To the black labours of his forge retires.

have consulted the *Sortes Homericæ*, and to have drawn one of these lines, wherein the death of Patroclus is ascribed to Apollo : after which, unthinkingly, he gave the name of that God for the word of battle. This is remarked as an unfortunate omen by some of the ancients, though I forget where I met with it.

v. 537. *The Father of the fires, &c.*] The ancients (says Sustathius) have largely celebrated the philosophical mysteries which they imagined to be shadowed under these descriptions, especially Damo (supposed the daughter of Pythagoras) whose explication is as follows. Thetis, who receives the arms, means the apt order and disposition of all things in the creation. By the fire and the wind raised by the bellows, are meant *air* and *fire*, the most active of all the elements. The emanations of the fire are those *golden maids* that waited on Vulcan. The circular shield is the *world*, being of a spherical figure. The gold, brass, the silver, and the tin are the elements—*the* fire, the firm brass is earth, the silver is air, and the soft tin, water. And thus far (say they)



## 222 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Soon as he bade them blow, the bellows turn'd 539  
Their iron mouths ; and where the furnace burn'd,

Homer speaks a little obscurely, but afterwards he names them expressly, οὐ μὲν γαῖαν ἔτενξ, οὐ δὲ αἰγαλὸν, οὐ δὲ θάλασσαν, to which, for the fourth element, you must add Vulcan, who makes the shield. The extreme circle that run round the shield, which he calls *splendid* and *threefold*, is the zodiack; threefold in its breadth, within which all the planets move; splendid, because the sun passes always through the midst of it. The silver handle by which the shield is fastened, at both extremities, is the *axis of the world*, imagined to pass through it, and upon which it turns. The five folds are those parallel circles that divide the world, the *polar*, the *tropicks*, and the *equator*.

Heraclides Ponticus thus pursues the allegory. Homer (says he) makes the working of his shield, that is the world, to be begun by *night*; as indeed all matter lay undistinguished in an original and universal *night*: which is called *chaos* by the poets.

To bring the matter of the shield to separation and form, Vulcan presides over the work, or, as we may say an *essential warmth*: All things, says Heraclitus, being made by the operation of fire.

And because the *architect* is at this time to give a form and ornament to the world he is making, it is not rash, that he is said to be married to one of the Graces.

On the broad shield the *Maker's* hand engraves  
The earth and seas beneath, the pole above,  
The sun unwearied, and the circled moon.

Thus in the beginning of the world, he first lays the earth as a foundation of a building, whose vacancies are filled up with the flowings of the sea. Then he spreads out the sky for a kind of divine roof over it, lights the elements, now separated from their former confusion, with the sun, the moon,

And all those stars that crown the skies with fire:



## Book XVIII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 223

Resounding breath'd : at once the blast expires,  
And twenty forges catch at once the fires ;  
Just as the God directs, now loud, now low,  
They raise a tempest, or they gently blow.

In hissing flames huge silver bars are roll'd, 545  
And stubborn brass, and tin, and solid gold :  
Before, deep fix'd, th' eternal anvils stand ;  
The pond'rous hammer loads his better hand,  
His left with tongs turns the vex'd metal round,  
And thick, strong strokes, the doubling vaults  
rebound. 550

Then first he form'd th' immense and solid shield ;  
Rich various artifice emblaz'd the field ;  
Its utmost verge a threefold circle bound ;  
A silver chain suspends the massy round ;  
~~Five~~ ample plates the broad expanse compose, 555  
And god-like labours on the surface rose.

Where, by the word *crown*, which gives the idea of  
kindness, he again hints at the figure of the world ; and  
though he could not particularly name the stars like Ara-  
tus (who professed to write upon them) yet he has not  
omitted to mention the principal. From hence he passes  
to represent two *allegorical* cities, one of *peace*, the other  
of *war*; Empedocles seems to have taken from Homer  
his assistance, that all things had their original from *strife*  
and *friendship*.

All these refinements (not to call them absolute whim-  
sies) I leave just as I found them, to the reader's judgment  
or mercy. ~~I~~ call it *learning* to have read them, but  
I fear it is ~~only~~ to quote them.



224 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

There shone the image of the master-mind :  
There earth, there heav'n, there ocean he design'd  
Th' unwearied sun, the moon compleatly round ;  
The starry lights that heav'n's high convex  
crown'd ;

560

The Pleiads, Hyads, with the northern team ;  
And great Orion's more resplendent beam ;  
To which, around the axle of the sky,  
The Bear revolving, points his golden eye,  
Still shines exalted on th' æthereal plain, 565  
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.

v. 566. *Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.*] The criticks make use of this passage, to prove that Homer was ignorant of astronomy ; since he believed the Bear was the only constellation which never bathed itself in the ocean, that is to say, that did not set, and was ~~always~~ visible ; for, say they, this is common to other constellations of the arctick circle, as the lesser Bear, the Drago i, the greatest part of Cepheus, &c. To salve Homer, Aristotle answers, That he calls it the only one, to shew that it is the only one of those constellations he had spoken of, or that he has put the *only* for the *principal* or the ~~best~~ known. Strabo justifies this after another manner, in the beginning of his first book : " Under the name of the Bear and the Chariot, Homer comprehends all the arctick circle ; for there being several other stars in that circle which never set, he could not say, that the Bear was the only one which did not bathe itself in the ocean ; wherefore those are deceived, who accuse the poet of ignorance, as if he knew the Bear only when there are two ; for the lesser was not distinguished in his time. The Phœnicians were the first who observed it, and made use of it in their navigation ; and the



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 225

Two cities radiant on the shield appear,  
The image one of peace, and one of war.

"figure of that sign passed from them to the Greeks :  
the same thing happened in regard to the constellation  
of Berenice's hair, and that of Canopus, which re-  
ceived those names very lately ; and as Aratus says  
well, there are several other stars which have no names.  
Crates was then in the wrong to endeavour to correct  
this passage, in putting *οὐσίας* for *οὐσίης*, for he tries to avoid  
that which there is no occasion to avoid. Heraclitus  
did better, who put the Bear for the arctick circle, as  
Homer has done. *The Bear* (says he) *is the limit of*  
*the rising and setting of the stars.*" Now it is the *arctick circle*, and not the Bear, which is that limit. "It is  
therefore evident, that by the word Bear, which he  
calls the Waggon, and which he says observes Orion,  
he understands the arctick circle ; that by the ocean he  
means the horizon where the stars rise and set ; and by  
those words, *which turns in the same place, and doth not*  
*bathe itself in the ocean*, he shews that the arctick circle  
is the most northern part of the horizon, &c." *Dacier*  
*et Aris.*

Monf. Teraffon combats this passage with great warmth.  
But it will be a sufficient vindication of our author to say, that some other constellations, which are likewise perpetually above the horizon in the latitude where Homer writ, were not at that time discovered ; and that whether Homer knew that the Bear's not setting was occasioned by the latitude, and that in a smaller latitude it would set, is of no consequence ; for if he had known it, it was still more poetical not to take notice of it.

v. 567. *Two cities, &c.*] In one of these cities are represented all the advantages of *peace* : and it was impossible to have chosen two better emblems of *peace*, than



226 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,  
And solemn dance, and Hymenæal rite ; 570  
Along the street the new-made brides are led,  
With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed :  
The youthful dancers in a circle bound  
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound :  
Thro' the fair streets, the matrons in a row, 575  
Stand in their porches, and enjoy the show.

There, in the Forum swarm a num'rous train,  
The subject of debate, a townsmen slain :  
One pleads the fine discharg'd, which one deny'd,  
And bade the publick and the laws decide : 580

*marriages and justice.* It is said this city was Athens, for marriages were first instituted there by Cecrops; and judgment upon murder was first founded there. The ancient state of Attica seems represented in the neighbouring fields, where the ploughers and reapers are at work, and a king is overlooking them: for Tripfolemus, who reigned there, was the first who sowed corn: this was the imagination of Agallias Cercyreus, as we find him cited by Eustathius.

v. 579. *The fine discharg'd.]* Murder was not always punished with death, or so much as banishment; but when some fine was paid, the criminal was suffered to remain in the city. So Iliad ix.

——— Καὶ μὲν τίς τε κασιμήτοι φένε  
Παιῶν, ἢ ὁ ταῖδες ἐδιξαί τεθυεῖστος.  
Καὶ δὲ μὲν ἡ δημερό μέντοι αὐτῷ πόλλα ἀποίσας.

——— If a brother bleed,  
On just atonement we remit the deed,  
A sire the slaughter of his son forgives,  
The price of blood discharg'd, the murd'rer lives



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 227

The witness is produc'd on either hand :  
For this, or that, the partial people stand :  
Th' appointed heralds still the noisy bands,  
And form a ring, with sceptres in their hands ;  
On seats of stone, within the sacred place, 585  
The rev'rend elders nodded o'er the case ;  
Alternate, each th' attesting scepter took,  
And rising solemn, each his sentence spoke.  
Two golden talents lay amidst, in sight,  
The prize of him who best adjudg'd the right. 590  
Another part (a prospect diff'ring far)  
Glow'd with resplendent arms, and horrid war.

v. 590. *The prize of him who best adjudg'd the right.*] Eustathius informs us, that it was anciently the custom to have a reward given to that judge who pronounced the best sentence. M Dacier opposes this authority, and will have it, that this reward was given to the person who upon the decision of the suit appeared to have the justest cause. The difference between these two customs, in the reason of the thing, is very great : for the one must have been an encouragement to justice, the other a provocation to dissension. It were to be wanting in a due reverence to the wisdom of the ancients, and of Homer in particular, not to chuse the former sense : and I have the honour to be confirmed in this opinion, by the ablest judge, as well as the best practiser of equity, my lord Harcourt, at whose seat I translated this book.

v. 591. *Another part (a prospect diff'ring far,) &c.*] The same Agamemnon, cited above, would have this city in war to be made of Eleusina, but upon very slight reasons. What is wonderful, is, that all the accidents and events of war are set before our eyes in this short compass. The



228 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Two mighty hosts a leaguer'd town embrace,  
And one would pillage, one would burn the place.  
Meantime the townsmen, arm'd with silent care,  
A secret ambush on the foe prepare : . . . . . 596  
Their wives, their children, and the watchful band  
Of trembling parents, on the turrets stand.  
They march ; by Pallas and by Mars made bold :-  
Gold were the Gods, their radiant garments  
gold, . . . . . 600

And gold their armour : these the squadron led,  
August, divine, superiour by the head !  
A place for ambush fit, they found, and stood  
Cover'd with shields, beside a silver flood.  
Two spies at distance lurk, and watchful seem . . . . . 605  
If sheep or oxen seek the winding stream.  
Soon the white flocks proceeded o'er the plains,  
And steers slow-moving, and two shepherd swains ;  
Behind them, piping on their reeds, they go,  
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe. . . . . 610  
In arms the glitt'ring squadron rising round,  
Rush sudden ; hills of slaughter heap the ground,  
Whole flocks and herds lie bleeding on the plains,  
And, all amidst them, dead, the shepherd swains !  
The bellowing oxen the besiegers hear ; . . . . . 615  
They rise, take horse, approach, and meet the war ;  
several scenes are excellently disposed to represent the  
whole affair. Here is in the space of thirty lines, a siege,  
a sally, an ambush, the surprise of a convoy, and a bat-  
tle ; with scarce a single circumstance proper to any of  
these, omitted.



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 229

They fight, they fall, beside the silver flood ;  
The waving silver seem'd to blush with blood.  
There tumult, there contention stood confest ;  
**One rear'd a dagger at a captive's breast,** 620  
**One held a living foe, that freshly bled**  
With new-made wounds ; another dragg'd a dead  
Now here, now there, the carcases they tore :  
Fate stalk'd amidst them, grim with human gore.  
And the whole war came out, and met the eye ;  
**And each bold figure seem'd to live, or die.** 626  
A field deep furrow'd, next the God design'd,  
The third time labour'd by the sweating hind ;

v. 619. *There tumult, &c.]* This is the first place in the whole description of the buckler, where Homer rises in his style, and uses the allegorical ornaments of poetry ; so natural it was for his imagination (now heated with the fighting scenes of the Iliad) to take fire when the image of a battle was presented to it.

v. 627. *A field deep furrow'd, &c.]* Here begin the descriptions of rural life, in which Homer appears as great a master as in the great and terrible parts of poetry. One would think he did this on purpose to rival his contemporary Hesiod, on those very subjects to which his genius was particularly bent. Upon this occasion, I must take notice of that Greek poem, which is commonly ascribed to Hesiod, under the title of Ἀσπὶς Ἡρακλεῖον. Some of the ancier's mention such a work as Hesiod's, but that amounts to no proof that this is the same : which indeed is not an express poem upon the shield of Hercules, but a fragment of the history of that hero. What regards the shield is a manifest copy from this of Achilles ; and consequently



## 230 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XVIII.

The shining shares full many ploughmen guide,  
And turn their crooked yokes on every side. 630

it is not of Hesiod. For if he was not more ancient, he was at least contemporary with Homer : and neither of them could be supposed to borrow so shamelessly from the other, not only the plan of entire descriptions, (as those of the marriage, the harvest, the vineyard, the ocean round the margin, &c.) but also whole verses together : those of the Parca, in the battle, are repeated word for word,

— — — — — οὐδὲ δὲ πάντας  
“Αλλον ζωὸν ἔχεσσα πέμπατον, ἀλλον δύπτον,  
“Αλλον τεθνεῖστα κατὰ μόθον Εἰλις’ πεδοῖται.  
Εἴμα δὲ ἔχ αἱμφ’ ὄμοισι διφοίνεον αἷματι φωτῶν.

And indeed half the poem is but a sort of Cento composed out of Homer's verses. The reader need only cast an eye on these two descriptions, to see the vast difference of the original and the copy ; and I dare say he will readily agree with the sentiments of monsieur Dacier, in applying to them that famous verse of Sannazarius,

“ Illum hominem dices, hunc posuisse Deum.

v. 627.] I ought not to forget the many apparent allusions to the descriptions on this shield, which are to be found in those pictures of peace and war, the city and country, in the eleventh book of Milton : who was doubtless fond of any occasion to shew how much he was charmed with the beauty of all these lively images. He makes his angels paint those objects which he shews to Adam, in the colours, and almost the very stile of Homer. Such is that passage of the harvest field,

His eye he open'd, and beheld a field  
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves  
New reap'd ; the other part sheep-walks and folds,



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 231

Still as at either end they wheel around,  
The master meets 'em with his goblet crown'd ;  
The hearty draught rewards, renews their toil,  
Then back the turning plough-shares cleave the soil :  
Behind, the rising earth, in ridges, roll'd ; 635  
And sable look'd, tho' form'd of molten gold.

In midst an altar, as the landmark, stood,  
Rustick, of grassy sord, &c.

That of the marriages,

They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke  
Hymen (then first to marriage rites invok'd)  
With feast and musick all the tents resound.

But more particularly, the following lines are in a manner a translation of our author :

One way a band select, from forage drives  
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
From a fat meadow-ground ; or fleecy flock,  
Ewes and their bleating lambs, across the plain,  
Their booty : scarce with life the shepherds fly,  
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray.  
With cruel tournament the squadrons join  
Where cattle pastur'd late ; now scatter'd lies  
With carcases and arms, th' ensanguin'd field,  
Deserted.—Others to a city strong  
Lay siege, encamp'd ; by battery, scale, and mine  
Assaulting ; others from the wall defend  
With dart and jaw'lin, stones and sulph'rous fire :  
On such hand slaughter and gigantick deeds.  
In other part the scepter'd heralds call  
T : in the city gates : anon  
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriours mix  
Affable, and harangues are heard—



## 232 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XVIII.

Another field rose high with waving grain ;  
With bended sickles stand the reaper-train :  
Here stretch'd in ranks the levell'd swarths are found,  
Sheaves heap'd on sheaves, here thicken up the  
ground. 640

With sweeping stroke the mowers strow the lands ;  
The gath'lers follow, and collect in bands ;  
And last the children, in whose arms are borne  
(Too short to gripe them) the brown sheaves of  
corn.

The rustick monarch of the field descries 645  
With silent glee, the heaps around him rise.  
A ready banquet on the turf is laid,  
Beneath an ample oak's expanded shade.  
The victim ox the sturdy youth prepare ;  
The reaper's due repast, the womens care 650

Next, ripe in yellow gold, a vineyard shines,  
Bent with the pond'rous harvest of its vines ;  
A deeper dye the dangling clusters show,  
And curl'd on silver props, in order glow :  
A darker metal mixt, intrench'd the place ; 655  
And pales of glitt'ring tin th' enclosure grace.  
To this, one path-way gently winding leads,  
Where march a train with baskets on their heads,

v. 645. *The rustick monarch of the field.*] Dacier takes this to be a piece of ground given to a hero in reward of his services. It was in no respect unworthy such a person, in those days, to see his harvest got in, and to overlook his reapers : it is very conformable to the manners of the ancient patriarchs, such as they are described to us in the holy scriptures.



## Book XVIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 233

(Fair maids, and blooming youths) that smiling  
bear,

The purple product of th' autumnal year. 660

To these a youth awakes the warbling strings,

Whose tender lay the fate of Linus sings ;

In measur'd dance behind him move the train,

Tune soft the voice, and answer to the strain. 664

Here, herds of oxen march, erect and bold,  
Rear high their horns, and seem to low in gold,  
And speed to meadows on whose sounding shores  
A rapid torrent thro' the rushes roars :

v. 662. *The fate of Linus.*] There are two interpretations of this verse in the original : that which I have chosen is confirmed by the testimony of Herodotus, lib. ii. and Pausanias, Bœoticis. Linus was the most ancient name in poetry, the first upon record who invented verse and measure amongst the Grecians : he past for the son of Apollo or Mercury, and was preceptor to Hercules, Thamyris, and Orpheus. There was a solemn custom among the Greeks of bewailing annually the death of their first poet : Pausanias informs us, that before the yearly sacrifice to the Muses on mount Helicon, the obsequies of Linus were performed, who had a statue, and altar erected to him, in that place. Homer alludes to that custom in this passage, and was doubtless fond of paying this respect to the old father of poetry. Virgil has done the same in that fine celebration of him, Eclog. vi.

“ Tum canit errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum,  
“ U que viro Phœbi chorus affurrexerit omnis ;  
“ Linus hæc illi, divino carmine, pastor  
“ (Floribus atque apio crines ornatus amaro)  
“ Dixerit—&c.”

And again in the fourth Eclogue :



## 234 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XVIII.

Four golden herdsmen as their guardians stand,  
And nine four dogs compleat the rustick band. 670  
Two lions rushing from the wood appear'd ;  
And seiz'd a bull, the master of the herd :  
He roar'd : in vain the dogs, the men withstood ;  
They tore his flesh, and drank the sable blood.  
The dogs (oft shear'd in vain) desert the prey, 675  
Dread the grim terrors, and at distance bay.

Next this, the eye the art of Vulcan leads  
Deep thro' fair forests, and a length of meads ;  
And stalls, and folds, and scatter'd cots between ;  
And fleecy flocks, that whiten all the scene. 680

A figur'd dance succeeds : such once was seen  
In lofty Gnoſſus ; for the Cretan queen,

“ Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,  
“ Nec Linus ; huic mater quamvis atque huic pater adsit,  
“ Orpheo Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo.”

v. 681. *A figur'd dance.*] There were two sorts of dances, the Pyrrhick and the common dance : Homer has joined both in this description. We see the Pyrrhick, or military, is performed by the youths who have swords on, the other by the virgins crowned with garlands.

Here the ancient scholiaſts say, that whereas before it was the custom for men and women to dance separately, the contrary cuſtom was afterwards brought in by ſeven youths, and as many virgins, who were ſaved by Theseus from the labyrinth ; and that this dance was taught them by Daedalus : to which Homer here alludes. See “ Ion. Halic. Hist. lib. vii. cap. 68.

It is worth observing that the Grecian dance is ſtill performed in this manner in the Oriental nations : the youths and maids dance in a ring, beginning ſlowly ; by



Book XVIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 235

Form'd by Daedalean art : a comely band  
Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand.  
The maids in soft fimars of linen dreft ; 685  
The youths all graceful in the glossy vest :  
Of those the locks with flow'ry wreaths introll'd ;  
Of these the sides adorn'd with swords of gold,  
That glitt'ring gay, from silver belts depend.  
Now all at once they rise, at once descend 690  
With well-taught-feet : now shape, in oblique ways,  
Confus'dly regular, the moving maze :  
Now forth at once, too swift for sight they spring,  
And undistinguish'd blend the flying ring :  
So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle tost, 695  
And rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost.  
The gazing multitudes admire around :  
Two active tumblers in the center bound ;  
Now high, now low, their pliant limbs they bend :  
And gen'ral songs the sprightly revel end. 700

Thus the broad shield complete the artist crown'd  
With his last hand, and pour'd the ocean round :

degrees the musick plays a quicker time, till at last they  
dance with the utmost swiftness : and towards the con-  
clusion, they sing (as it is said here) in a general chorus.

v. 702. *And pour'd the ocean round.]* Vulcan was the  
God of fire, and passes over this part of the description  
negligently : for which reason Virgil (to take a different  
walk) make half his description of Æneas's buckler  
consist in sea-fight. For the same reason he has laboured  
the sea-piece among his Games, more than any other,  
because Homer had described nothing of this kind in the  
funeral of Patroclus.



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In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,  
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole,  
This done, whate'er a warriour's use requires,  
He forg'd ; the cuirass that outshines the fires, 706  
The greaves of ductile tin, the helm imprest  
With various sculpture, and the golden crest.  
At Thetis' feet the finish'd labour lay ;  
She, as a falcon, cuts th' aereal way, 710  
Swift from Olympus' snowy summit flies,  
And bears the blazing present thro' the skies.

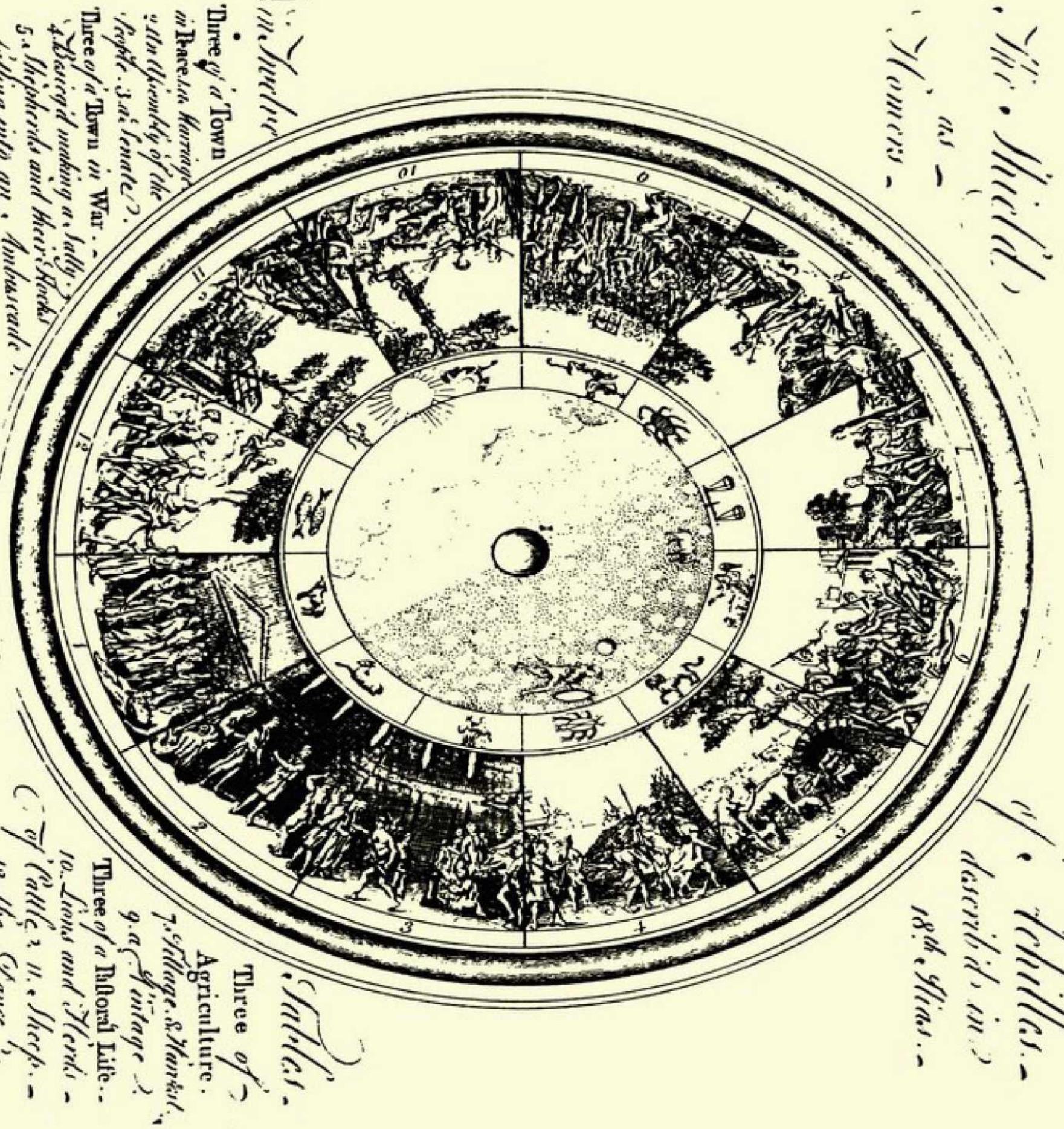


The shield

described in  
18<sup>th</sup> c. Hist.

Homer

• Villas





[ . 237 ]

# OBSEERVATIONS ON THE SHIELD of ACHILLES.

THE Poet intending to shew in its full lustre, his genius for description, makes choice of this interval from action and the leisure of the night, to display that talent at large in the famous buckler of Achilles. His intention was no less than to draw the picture of the whole world in the compass of this shield. We see first the universe in general ; the heavens are spread, the stars are hung up, the earth is stretched forth, the seas are poured round : we next see the world in a nearer and more particular view ; the cities delightful in peace, or formidable in war ; the labours of the country, and the fruit of those labours, in the harvests and the vintages ; the pastoral life in its pleasures and its dangers : in a word, all the occupations, all the ambitions, and all the diversions of mankind. This noble and comprehensive design he has executed in a manner that challenged the admiration of all the ancients : and how right an idea they had of this grand design, may be judged from that verse of Ovid Met. xiii. where he calls it,

—“ Clypeus *vasti* cælatus imagine mundi.”

It is indeed astonishing, how after this, the arrogance



of some moderns could unfortunately chuse the noblest part of the noblest poet for the object of their blind censures. Their criticisms, however just enough upon other parts, yet, when employed on this buckler, are to the utmost weak and impotent.

—“ postquam arma Dei ad Vulcania ventum est  
“ Mortalis mucro, glacies seu futilis, icta  
“ Diffiluit” —

I design to give the reader the sum of what has been said on this subject. First, a reply to the loose and scattered objections of the criticks, by M. Dacier : then the regular plan and distribution of the shield, by Mons. Boivin : and lastly, I shall attempt what has not yet been done, to consider it as a work of painting, and prove it in all respects conformable to the most just ideas and established rules of that art.

I. It is the fate (says M. Dacier) of these arms of Achilles, to be still the occasion of quarens and disputes. Julius Scaliger was the first who appeared against this part, and was followed by a whole herd. These object in the first place, that it is impossible to represent the movement of the figures ; and in condemning the manner, they take the liberty to condemn also the subject, which they say is trivial, and not well understood. It is certain that Homer speaks of the figures on this buckler, as if they were alive : and some of the ancients taking his expressions to the strictness of the letter, did really believe that they had all sorts of motions. Eustathius shewed the absurdity of that sentiment by a passage of Homer himself ; “ That poet, says he, to shew that his figures are not animated, as some have pretended by an excessive



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affection for the prodigious, took care to say that they *moved and fought*, as if they *were living men.*" The ancients certainly founded this ridiculous opinion on a rule of Aristotle : for they thought the poet could not make his description more *admirable* and *marvellous*, than in making his figures animated, since (as Aristotle says) the *original should always excel the copy.* That shield is the work of a God : it is the original, of which the engraving and painting of men is but an imperfect copy ; and there is nothing impossible to the Gods. But they did not perceive, that by this Homer would have fallen into an extravagant admirable which would not have been probable. Therefore it is without any necessity Eustathius adds, " That it is possible all those figures did not stick close to the shield, but that they were detached from it, and moved by springs, in such a manner that they appeared to have motion ; as Æschylus has feigned something like it, in his *seven captains against Thebes.*" But without having recourse to that conjecture, we can shew that there is nothing more simple and natural than the description of that shield, and there is not one word which Homer might not have said of it, if it had been the work of a man ; for there is a great deal of difference between the work itself, and the description of it.

Let us examine the particulars for which they blame Homer. They say he describes two towns on his shield which *speak different languages.* It is the Latin translation, and not Homer that says so ; the word *μερόνων*, is a common epithet of men, and which signifies only, that they have *an articulate voice.* These towns could not speak different languages, since, as



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## OBSERVATIONS on the

the ancients have remarked, they were Athens and Eleusina, both which spake the same language. But though that epithet should signify, *which spoke different languages*, there would be nothing very surprising ; for Virgil said what Homer it seems must not :

“ *Victæ longo ordine gentes,*  
“ *Quam variae linguis.*” —— *AEn. viii.*

If a painter should put into a picture one town of France and another of Flanders, might not one say they were two towns which spake different languages ?

Homer (they tell us) says in another place, that *we bear the barangues of two pleaders*. This is an unfair exaggeration : he only says, *two men pleaded*, that is, were represented pleading. Was not the same said by Pliny and Nicomachus, that he had painted two Greeks, which spake one after another ? Can we express ourselves otherwise of those two arts, which though they are mute, yet have a language ? Or in explaining a painting of Raphael or ouſſon, can we prevent animating the figures, in making them speak conformably to the design of the painter ? But how could the engraver represent those young shepherds and virgins that dance first in a ring, and then in setts ? Or those troops which were in ambuscade ? This would be difficult indeed, if the workman had not the liberty to make his persons appear in different circumstances. All the objections against the young man who sings at the same time that he plays on the harp, the bull that roars whilst he is devoured by a lion, and against the musical concerts, are childish ; for we can never speak of painting if we banish those expressions. Pliny says of Apelles, that he painted Clytus on horseback going to battle, and demanding his helmet



## SHIELD of ACHILLES. 241

of his squire : of Aristides, that he drew a beggar whom he could almost understand, *pene cum voce* : of Cresilochus, that he had painted Jupiter bringing forth Bacchus, and crying out like a woman, & *mulieriter ingemiscerent* : and of Nicearchus, that he had drawn a piece, in which Hercules was seen very melancholy on reflection of his madness, *Herculem tristem, insaniam pœnitentiā*. No one sure will condemn those ways of expression which are so common. The same author has said much more of Apelles : he tells us, he painted those things which could not be painted, as thunder ; *pinxit quæ pingi non possunt* : and of Timanthus, that in all his works there was something more understood than was seen ; and though there was all the art imaginable, yet there was still more ingenuity than art : *Atque in omnibus ejus operibus, intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur* ; & cum ars summa sit, *ingenium tamquam ultram artem est*. If we take the pains to compare these expressions with those of Homer, we shall find him altogether excusable in his *manner* of describing the buckler.

We now come to the *matter*. If this shield (says a modern critick) had been made in a wiser age, it would have been more correct and less charged with objects. There are two things which cause the censurers to fall into this false criticism : the first is, that they think the shield was no broader than the brims of a hat, whereas it was large enough to cover a whole man. The other is, that they did not know the design of the poet, and imagined this description was only the whimsy of an irregular wit, who did it by chance, and not following nature ; for they never so much as



entered into the intention of the poet, nor knew the shield was designed as a representation of the universe.

It is happy that Virgil has made a buckler for Æneas, as well as Homer for Achilles. The Latin poet, who imitated the Greek one, always took care to accommodate those things which time had changed, so as to render them agreeable to the palate of his readers ; yet he hath not only charged his shield with a great deal more work, since he paints all the actions of the Romans from Ascanius to Augustus ; but has not avoided any of those manners of expression which offend the criticks. We see there the wolf of Romulus and Remus, who gives them her dugs *one after another*, *mulcere alternos, & corpora fingere linguā* : the rape of the Sabines, and the war which followed it, *subitoque novum confurgere bellum* : Metius torn by four horses, and Tullus who draws his entrails through the forest : Porsenna commanding the Romans to receive Tarquin, and besieging Rome : The geese flying to the porches of the capitol, and giving notice by their voices of the attack of the Gauls.

“ Atque hic auratis volitans argenteus anser  
“ Porticibus, Gallos in limine adesse canebat.”

We see the Salian dance, hell, and the pains of the damned ; and farther off, the place of the blessed, where Cato presides : we see the famous battle of Actium, where we may distinguish the captains : Agrippa with the Gods, and the winds favourable ; and Anthony leading on all the forces of the East, Ægypt, and the Bactrians : the fight begins, the sea is red with blood, Cleopatra gives the signal for a retreat, and



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and calls her troops with a Systrum. *Patrio vocat agmina Systro.* The Gods, or rather the monsters of Egypt, fight against Neptune, Venus, Minerva, Mars, and Apollo : we see Anthony's fleet beaten, and the Nile sorrowfully opening his bosom to receive the conquered : Cleopatra looks pale and almost dead at the thought of that death she had already determined ; nay, we see the very wind Iapis, which hastens her flight : we see the three triumphs of Augustus ; that prince consecrates three hundred temples, the altars are filled with ladies offering up sacrifices, Augustus sitting at the entrance of Apollo's temple, receives presents, and hangs them on the pillars of the temple ; while all the conquered nations pass by, who speak different languages, and are differently equipped and armed.

— “ Incedunt victæ longo ordine gentes,  
Quam variæ linguis, habitu tum vestis & armis.”

Nothing can better justify Homer, or shew the wisdom and judgment of Virgil ; he was charmed with Achilles's shield, and therefore would give the same ornament to his poem. But as Homer had painted the universe, he was sensible that nothing remained for him to do ; he had no other way to take than that of prophecy, and shew what the descendant of his hero should perform : and he was not afraid to go beyond Homer, because there is nothing improbable in the hands of a God. If the criticks say, that this is justifying one fault by another, I desire they would agree among themselves : for Scaliger, who was the first that condemned Homer's shield, admires Virgil's. But suppose they should agree, it would be foolish to



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endeavour to persuade us, that what Homer and Vir-  
gil have done by the approbation of all ages, is not  
good ; and to make us think, that their particu  
taste should prevail over that of all other men. No-  
thing is more ridiculous than to trouble one's self to  
answer men, who shew so little reason in their criti-  
cisms, that we can do them no greater favour, than to  
ascribe it to their ignorance.

Thus far the objections are answered by Mons. Da-  
cier. Since when, some others have been started, as  
that the objects represented on the buckler, have no  
reference to the poem, no agreement with Thetis who  
procured it, Vulcan who made it, or Achilles for  
whom it was made.

To this it is replied, that the representation of the  
sea was agreeable enough to Thetis ; that the spheres  
and celestial fires were so to Vulcan ; (though the  
truth is, any piece of workmanship was equally fit to  
come from the hands of this God) and that the images  
of a town besieged, a battle, and an ambuscade, were  
objects sufficiently proper for Achilles. But, after all,  
where was the necessity that they should be so ? They  
had at least been as fit for one hero as another : and  
Æneas, as Virgil tells us, knew not what to make of  
the figures on his shield.

“ Rerumque ignarus, imagine gaudet.”

II. But still the main objection, and that in which  
the vanity of the moderns has triumphed the most, is,  
that the shield is crowded with such a multiplicity of  
figures, as could not possibly be represented in the  
compass of it. The late dissertation of Mons. Boivin  
has put an end to this cavil ; and the reader will have



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the pleasure to be convinced of it by ocular demonstration, in the print annexed.

This author supposes the buckler to have been perfectly round : he divides the convex surface into four concentrick circles.

The circle next the center contains the globe of the earth and the sea, in miniature : he gives this circle the dimension of three inches.

The second circle is allotted for the heavens and the stars : he allows the space of ten inches between this, and the former circle.

The third shall be eight inches distant from the second. The space between these two circles shall be divided into twelve compartments, each of which makes a picture of ten or eleven inches deep.

The fourth circle makes the margin of the buckler : and the interval between this and the former, being of three inches, is sufficient to represent the waves and currents of the ocean.

All these together make but four feet in the whole in diameter. The print of these circles and divisions will serve to prove, that the figures will neither be crowded nor confused, if disposed in the proper place and order.

As to the size and figure of the shield, it is evident from the poets, that in the time of the Trojan war there were shields of an extraordinary magnitude. The buckler of Ajax is often compared to a tower ; and in the sixth Iliad, that of Hector is described to cover him from the shoulders to the ankles.

Αγαφὴ δὲ οἱ σφυρὰ τύπει καὶ αὐχένα δέρμα κελαινή  
Αἰδηξ ἡ πυράτη Σέεν αὐτίδες ὄμφαλούσσος. v. 117.



In the second verse of the description of this buckler of Achilles, it is said that Vulcan cast round it a radiant circle.

Περὶ δὲ ἀλυτα βάλλε φέντε. v. 479.

Which proves the figure to have been round. But if it be alledged that *ἀλυξ* as well signifies *oval* as *circular*, it may be answered, that the circular figure better agrees to the spheres represented in the center, and to the course of the ocean at the circumference.

We may very well allow four feet diameter to this buckler : as one may suppose a larger size would have been too unwieldly, so a less would not have been sufficient to cover the breast and arm of a man of a stature so large as Achilles.

In allowing four feet diameter to the whole, each of the twelve compartments may be of ten or eleven inches in depth, which will be enough to contain, without any confusion, all the objects which Homer mentions. Indeed in this print, each compartment being but of one inch, the principal figures only are represented ; but the reader may easily imagine the advantage of nine or ten inches more. However, if the criticks are not yet satisfied, there is room enough, it is but taking in the literal sense the words *πανούσες παιδαλῶν*, with which Homer begins his description, and the buckler may be supposed engraven on both sides, which supposition will double the size of each piece : the one side may serve for the general description of heaven and earth, and the other for all the particulars.

III. It having been now shewn, that the shield of Homer is blameless as to its design and disposition,



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and that the subject (so extensive as it is) may be contracted within the due limits ; not being one vast unportioned heap of figures, but divided into twelve regular compartments : what remains, is to consider this piece as a compleat *idea* of painting, and a sketch for what one may call an *universal picture*. This is certainly the light in which it is chiefly to be admired, and in which alone the criticks have neglected to place it.

There is reason to believe that Homer did in this, as he has done in other arts, (even in mechanicks) that is, comprehend whatever was known of it in his time ; if not (as is highly probable) from thence extend his ideas yet farther, and give a more enlarged notion of it. Accordingly, it is very observable, that there is scarce a species or branch of this art which is not here to be found, whether history, battle-painting, landscape, architecture, fruits, flowers, animals, &c.

I think it possible that painting was arrived to a greater degree of perfection, even at that early period, than is generally supposed by those who have written upon it. Pliny expressly says, that it was not known in the time of the Trojan war. The same author, and others, represent it in a very imperfect state in Greece, in or near the days of Homer. They tell us of one painter, that he was the first who began to shadow ; and of another, that he filled his outlines only with a single colour, and that laid on every where alike : but we may have a higher notion of the art, from those descriptions of statues, carvings, tapestries, sculptures upon armour, and ornaments of all kinds, which every where occur in our author ; as well as from what he says of their beauty, the relieveo, and



their emulation of life itself. If we consider how much it is his constant practice to confine himself to the custom of the times whereof he writ, it will be hard to doubt but that painting and sculpture must have been then in great practice and repute.

The shield is not only described as a piece of sculpture, but of painting : the outlines may be supposed engraved, and the rest enamelled, or inlaid with various-coloured metals. The variety of colours is plainly distinguished by Homer, where he speaks of the *blackness* of the new-opened earth, of the *several colours* of the grapes and vines ; and in other places. The different metals that Vulcan is feigned to cast into the furnace, were sufficient to afford all the necessary colours : but if to those which are natural to the metals, we add also those which they are capable of receiving from the operation of fire, we shall find, that Vulcan had as great a variety of colours to make use of as any modern painter. That enamelling, or fixing colours by fire, was practised very anciently, may be conjectured from what Diodorus reports of one of the walls of Babylon, built by Semiramis, that *the bricks of it were painted before they were burned, so as to represent all sorts of animals*, lib. ii. chap. 4. Now it is but natural to infer, that men had made use of ordinary colours for the representation of objects, before they learned to represent them by such as are given by the operation of fire ; one being much more easy and obvious than the other, and that sort of painting by means of fire being but an imitation of the painting with a pencil and colours. The same inference will be rather enforced from the works of tapestry, which the women of those times interweaved with many colours ; as appears from the description of that veil which He,



## S H I E L D of A C H I L L E S. 249

cuba offers to Minerva in the sixth Iliad, and from a passage in the twenty-second, where Andromache is represented working flowers in a piece of this kind. They must certainly have known the use of colours themselves for painting, before they could think of dying threads with those colours, and weaving those threads close to one another, in order only to a more laborious imitation of a thing so much more easily performed by a pencil. This observation I owe to the Abbé Fraguier.

It may indeed be thought, that a genius so vast and comprehensive as that of Homer, might carry his views beyond the rest of mankind, and that in this buckler of Achilles he rather designed to give a scheme of what might be performed, than a description of what really was so : and since he made a God the artist, he might excuse himself from a strict confinement to what was known and practised at the time of the Trojan war. Let this be as it will, it is certain that he had, whether by learning, or by strength of genius, (though the latter be more glorious for Homer) a full and exact idea of painting in all its parts ; that is to say, in the *invention*, the *composition*, the *expression*, &c.

The *invention* is shewn in finding and introducing, in every subject, the *greatest*, the *most significant*, and *most suitable* objects. Accordingly in every single picture of the shield, Homer constantly finds out either those objects which are naturally the principal, those which most conduce to shew the subject, or those which set it in the liveliest and most agreeable light : these he never fails to dispose in the most advantageous manners, situations, and oppositions.



Next, we find all his figures differently *characterised*, in their expressions and attitudes, according to their several natures: the Gods (for instance) are distinguished in air, habit, and proportion, from men, in the fourth picture; masters from servants, in the eighth; and so of the rest.

Nothing is more wonderful than his exact observation of the *contrast*, not only between figure and figure, but between subject and subject. The city in peace is a contrast to the city in war: between the siege in the fourth picture, and the battle in the sixth, a piece of *paisage* is introduced, and rural scenes follow after. The country too is represented in war in the fifth, as well as in peace in the seventh, eighth, and ninth. The very animals are shewn in these two different states, in the tenth and eleventh. Where the subjects appear the same, he contrasts them some other way: thus the first picture of the town in peace having a predominant air of gaiety, in the dances and pomps of the marriage; the second has a character of earnestness and solicitude, in the dispute and pleadings. In the pieces of rural life, that of the ploughing is of a different character from the harvest, and that of the harvest from the vintage. In each of these there is a contrast of the *labour* and *mirth* of the country people: in the first, some are ploughing, others taking a cup of good liquor; in the next we see the reapers working in one part, and the banquet prepared in another; in the last, the labour of the vineyard is relieved with musick and a dance. The persons are no less varied, old and young, men and women: there being women in two pictures together, namely the eighth and ninth, it is remarkable that those in the latter are of a different character from the former;



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they who dress the supper being ordinary women, the others who carry baskets in the vineyard, young and beautiful virgins : and these again are of an inferior character to those in the twelfth piece, who are distinguished as people of condition by a more elegant dress. There are three dances in the buckler ; and these too are varied : that at the wedding is in a circular figure, that of the vineyard in a row, that in the last picture, a mingled one. Lastly, there is a manifest contrast in the colours ; nay, even in the back-grounds of the several pieces : for example, that of the ploughing is of a dark tint, that of the harvest yellow, that of the pasture green, and the rest in like manner.

That he was not a stranger to aereal perspective, appears in his expressly marking the distance of object from object : he tells us, for instance, that the two spies lay a little remote from the other figures ; and that the oak under which was spread the banquet of the reapers, stood *apart* : what he says of the valley, sprinkled all over with cottages and flocks, appears to be a description of a large country in perspective. And indeed, a general argument for this may be drawn from the number of figures on the shield ; which could not be all expressed in their full magnitude : and this is therefore a sort of proof that the art of lessening them according to perspective was known at that time.

What the criticks call the *three unities*, ought in reason as much to be observed in a picture as in a play ; each should have only *one principal action*, one *instant of time*, and one *point of view*. In this method of examination also, the shield of Homer will bear the test : he has been more exact than the greatest paint-



ers, who have often deviated from one or other of these rules ; whereas (when we examine the detail of each compartment) it will appear,

First, That there is but one principal action in each picture, and that no supernumerary figures or actions are introduced. This will answer all that has been said of the confusion and croud of figures on the shield, by those who never comprehended the plan of it.

Secondly, That no action is represented in one piece, which could not happen in the same instant of time. This will overthrow the objection against so many different actions appearing in one shield ; which, in this case, is much as absurd as to object against so many of Raphael's Cartoons appearing in one gallery.

Thirdly, It will be manifest that there are no objects in any one picture which could not be seen in one point of view. Hereby the Abbé Terrasson's whole criticism will fall to the ground, which amounts but to this, that the general objects of the heaven, stars, and sea, with the particular prospects of towns, fields, &c. could never be seen all at once. Homer was incapable of so absurd a thought ; nor could these heavenly bodies (had he intended them for a picture) have ever been seen together from one point ; for the constellations and the full moon, for example, could never be seen at once with the sun. But the celestial bodies were placed on the bos, as the ocean at the margin of the shield : these were no parts of the painting, but the former was only an ornament to the projection in the middle, and the latter a frame round about it : in the same manner as the divisions, projections, or angles of a roof are left to be ornamented at the discretion of the painter, with foliage, architecture, grotesque, or what he pleases : however his judgment will



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be still more commendable, if he contrives to make even these extrinsical parts, to bear some allusion to the main design : it is this which Homer has done, in placing a sort of sphere in the middle, and the ocean at the border, of a work, which was so expressly intended to represent the universe.

I proceed now to the detail of the shield ; in which the words of Homer being first translated, an attempt will be made to shew with what exact order all that he describes may enter into the composition. according to the rules of painting.



DESCRIPTION of the  
THE  
S H I E L D of A C H I L L E S,  
Divided into its several Parts.

*The Boss of the SHIELD.*

**V**ERSE 483. [Ἐν μίν γαῖαν, &c.] Here Vulcan represented the earth, the heaven, the sea, the indefatigable course of the sun, the moon in her full, all the celestial signs that crown Olympus, the Pleiades, the Hyades, the great Orion, and the Bear, commonly called the Wain, the only constellation which, never bathing itself in the ocean, turns about the pole, and observes the course of Orion.

The sculpture of these resembled somewhat of our terrestrial and celestial globes, and took up the center of the shield : it is plain by the huddle in which Homer expresses this, that he did not design it as a picture for a point of fight.

The circumference is divided into twelve compartments, each being a separate picture, as follow :

**First Compartiment. A Town in Peace.**

[Ἐν δὲ δύος περιστώλεις, &c.] He engraved two cities ; in one of them were represented nuptials and festivals. The spouses from their bridal chambers were conducted through the town by the light of torches. Every mouth sung the hymenæal song : the youths turned rapidly about in a circular dance : the flute and the lyre resounded : the women, every one in the street, standing in the porches, beheld and admired.

In this picture, the brides preceded by torch-bearers, are on the fore-ground : the dance in circles, and musicians behind them : the street in perspective or either



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side, the women and spectators in the porches, &c. dispersed through all the architecture.

### Second Compartment. An Assembly of People.

[*λαὸς δὲ εἰν αὐτῷ, &c.*] There was seen a number of people in the market-place, and two men disputing warmly : the occasion was the payment of a fine for a murder, which one affirmed before the people he had paid, the other denied to have received ; both demanded, that the affair should be determined by the judgment of an arbiter : the acclamations of the multitude favoured sometimes the one party, sometimes the other.

Here is a fine plan for a master-piece of expression ; any judge of painting will see our author has chosen that cause which, of all others, would give occasion to the greatest variety of expression : the father, the murderer, the witnesses, and the different passions of the assembly, would afford an ample field for this talent even to Raphael himself.

### Third Compartment. The Senate.

[*κηρυκεῖς δὲ ἀριστοὶ λαὸν ἐξέτυον, &c.*] The heralds ranged the people in order : the reverend elders were seated on seats of polished stone, in the sacred circle ; they rose up and declared their judgment, each in his turn, with the sceptre in his hand : two talents of gold were laid in the middle of the circle, to be given to him who should pronounce the most equitable judgment.

The judges are seated in the center of the picture ; one (who is the principal figure) standing up as speaking ; another in an action of rising, as in order to speak : the ground about them a prospect of the forum, filled with auditors and spectators.

### Fourth Compartment. A Town in War.

[*τὸν δὲ ἑτέρην πόλιν, &c.*] The other city was besieged by two glittering armies : they were not agreed whether to sack the town, or divide all the booty of it into two equal parts, to be shared between them : mean time the besieged secretly armed themselves for an ambuscade. Their wives, children,



*and old men were posted to defend their walls : the warriours marched from the town with Pallas and Mars at their head : the deities were of gold, and had golden armours, by the glories of which they were distinguished above the men, as well as by their superior stature, and more elegant proportions.*

This subject may be thus disposed : the town pretty near the eye, a-cross the whole picture, with the old men on the walls ; the chiefs of each army on the fore-ground : their different opinions for putting the town to the sword, or sparing it on account of the booty, may be expressed by some having their hands on their swords, and looking up to the city, others stopping them, or in an action of persuading against it. Behind, in prospect, the towns-men may be seen going out from the back gates, with the two deities at their head.

Homer here gives a clear instance of what the ancients always practised ; the distinguishing the Gods and Goddesses by characters of majesty or beauty somewhat superior to nature ; we constantly find this in their statues, and to this the modern masters owe the grand taste in the perfection of their figures.

#### Fifth Compartment. *An Ambuscade.*

[*O! δέ τις δέ πίκαστο, &c.]* Being arrived at the river where they designed their ambuscade (the place where the cattle were watered) they disposed themselves along the bank, covered with their arms : two spies lay at a distance from them observing when the oxen and sheep should come to drink. They came immediately, followed by two shepherds, who were playing on their pipes, without any apprehension of their danger.

This quiet picture is a kind of repose between the last and the following active pieces. Here is a scene of a river and trees, under which lie the soldiers, next the eye of the spectator ; on the farther bank are placed the two spies on one hand, and the flocks and shepherds appear coming at a greater distance on the other.



## Sixth Compartment. The Battle.

[*Ωι ποτὰ μεράδοις, &c.*] The people of the town rushed upon them, carried off the oxen and sheep, and killed the sheep-herds. The besiegers sitting before the town, heard the outcry, and mounting their horses, arrived at the bank of the river; where they stopped, and encountered each other with their spears. Discord, tumult, and fate raged in the midst of them. There might you see cruel Destiny dragging a dead soldier through the battle; two others she seized alive; one of which was mortally wounded; the other not yet hurt: the garment on her shoulders was stained with human blood; the figures appeared as if they lived, moved, and fought, you would think they really dragged off their dead.

The sheep and two shepherds lying dead upon the fore-ground. A battle-piece fills the picture. The allegorical figure of the Parca or Destiny is the principal. This had been a noble occasion for such a painter as Rubens, who has, with most happiness and learning, imitated the ancients in these fictitious and symbolical persons.

## Seventh Compartment. Tillage.

[*Ἐν δὲ ἵβει ταῦτα μάλαντα, &c.*] The next piece represented a large field, a deep and fruitful soil, which seemed to have been three times ploughed; the labourers appeared turning their ploughs on every side. As soon as they came to a land's-end, a man presented them a bowl of wine; cheered with this, they turned and worked down a new furrow, desirous to hasten to the next land's-end. The field was of gold, but looked black behind the ploughs, as if it had really been turned up; the surprising effect of the art of Vulcan.

The ploughmen must be represented on the fore-ground, in the action of turning at the end of the furrow. The invention of Homer is not content with barely putting down the figures, but enlivens them prodigiously with some remarkable circumstance: the giving a cup of wine to the ploughmen must occasion a fine expression in the faces.



## DESCRIPTION of the Twelfth Compartment. *The Dance.*

[Εν τῇ χορῷ, &c.] The skilful Vulcan then designed the figure and various motions of a dance, like that which Daedalus of old contrived in Gnoſſus for the fair Ariadne. There the young men and maidens danced hand in hand; the maids were dressed in linen garments, the men in rich and shining stuffs: the maids had flowery crowns on their heads; the men had swords of gold hanging from their sides in belts of silver. Here they seem to run in a ring with active feet, as swiftly as a wheel runs round when tried by the hand of the potter. There, they appeared to move in many figures, and sometimes to meet, sometimes to wind from each other. A multitude of spectators stood round, delighted with the dance. In the middle two nimble tumblers exercised themselves in feats of activity, while the song was carried on by the whole circle.

This picture includes the greatest number of persons: Homer himself has grouped them, and marked the manner of the composition. This piece would excel in the different airs of beauty which might be given to the young men and women, and the graceful attitudes in the various manners of dancing: on which account the subject might be fit for Guido, or perhaps could be no where better executed than in our own country.

### The BORDER of the SHIELD.

[Ἐπὶ τῆς πλατείας, &c.] Then lastly, he represented the rapid course of the great ocean, which he made to roll its waves round the extremity of the whole circumference.

This (as has been said before) was only the frame to the whole shield, and is therefore but slightly touched upon, without any mention of particular objects.

I ought not to end this essay, without vindicating myself from the vanity of treating of an art, which I love so much better than I understand: but I have been very careful to consult both the best performers and judges in



## SHIELD of ACHILLES.

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painting. I cannot neglect this occasion of saying, how happy I think myself in the favour of the most distinguished masters of that art. Sir Godfrey Kneller in particular allows me to tell the world, that he entirely agrees with my sentiments on this subject: and I cannot help wishing, that he who gives this testimony to Homer, would ennoble so great a design by his own execution of it. Vulcan never wrought for Thetis with more readiness and affection, than Sir Godfrey has done for me: and so admirable a picture of the whole universe could not be a more agreeable present than he has obliged me with, in the portraits of some of those persons, who are to me the dearest objects in it.



**T H E**  
**N I N E T E E N T H B O O K**  
**O F T H E**  
**R L I A D.**



# THE A R G U M E N T.

**The reconciliation of Achilles and Agamemnon.**

**THE TIS** brings to her son the armour made by Vulcan. She preserves the body of his friend from corruption, and commands him to assemble the army, to declare his resentment at an end. Agamemnon and Achilles are solemnly reconciled: the speeches, presents, and ceremonies on that occasion. Achilles is with great difficulty persuaded to refrain from the battle till the troops have refreshed themselves, by the advice of Ulysses. The presents are conveyed to the tent of Achilles; where Briseis laments over the body of Patroclus. The hero obstinately refuses all repast, and gives himself up to lamentations for his friend. Minerva descends to strengthen him, by the order of Jupiter. He arms for the fight: his appearance described. He addresses himself to his horses, and reproaches them with the death of Patroclus. One of them is miraculously endued with voice, and inspired to prophecy his fate; but the hero, not astonished by that prodigy, rushes with fury to the combat.

*The thirtieth day. The scene is on the sea-shore.*



THE  
NINETEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ILIA D.

**S**oon as Aurora heav'd her orient head  
Above the waves that blush'd with early red,  
(With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,  
And gild the courts of Heav'n with sacred light,) 5  
The immortal arms the Goddess-mother bears  
**S**her son : her son she finds in tears  
Stretch'd o'er Patroclus' corse ; while all the rest  
The sov'reign's sorrows in their own exprest.  
**A** ray divine her heav'nly presence shed,  
**A**nd thus, his hand soft-touching, Thetis said. 10  
    Suppress (my son) this rage of grief, and know  
It was not man, but Heav'n that gave the blow ;  
Behold what arms by Vulcan are bestow'd,  
Arms worthy thee, or fit to grace a God.

v. 13. *Behold what arms, &c.]* It is not poetry only which has had this idea, of giving divine arms to a hero ; we have a very remarkable example of it in our holy books, In the second of Maccabees, chap. xvi. Judas sees in a



Then drops the radiant burden on the ground ;  
Clang the strong arms, and ring the shores around .  
Back shrink the Myrmidons with dread surprise,  
And from the broad effulgence turn their eyes.  
Unmov'd, the hero kindles at the show,  
And feels with rage divine his bosom glow ;  
From his fierce eye-balls living flames expire,  
And flash incessant like a stream of fire :  
He turns the radiant gift ; and feeds his mind  
On all th' immortal artist had design'd.

Goddefs (he cry'd) these glorious arms that shine  
With matchless art, confess the hand divine. 26  
Now to the bloody battle let me bend :  
But ah ! the relicks of my slaughter'd friend !  
In those wide wounds thro' which his spirit fled,  
Shall flies, and worms obscene, pollute the dead !

dream the prophet Jeremiah bringing to him a sword <sup>as</sup> from God : though this was only a dream, or a vision, yet still it is the same idea. This example is likewise so much the more worthy of observation, as it is much later than the age of Homer : and as thereby it is seen, that the same way of thinking continued a long time amongst the oriental nations. *Dacier.*

v. 30. *Shall flies, and worms obscene, pollute the dead ?* The care which Achilles takes in this place to drive away the flies from the dead body of Patroclus, seems to us a mean employment and a care unworthy of a hero. But that office was regarded by Homer, and by all the Greeks of his time, as a pious duty consecrated by custom and religion ; which obliged the kindred and friends of the deceased to watch his corpse, and prevent any corruption



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 257

that unavailing care be laid aside,  
The azure Goddess to her son reply'd)

before the solemn day of his funeral. It is plain this devoir was thought an indispensable one, since Achilles could not discharge himself of it but by imposing it upon his mother. It is also clear, that in those times the preservation of a dead body was accounted a very important matter, since the Goddesses themselves, nay the most delicate of the Goddesses, made it the subject of their utmost attention. As Thetis preserves the body of Patroclus, and chases from it those insects that breed in the wounds and cause putrefaction, so Venus is employed day and night about that of Hector, in driving away the dogs to which Achilles had exposed it. Apollo, on his part, covers it with a thick cloud, and preserves its freshness amidst the greatest heats of the sun : and this care of the Deities over the dead was looked upon by men as a fruit of their piety.

There is an excellent remark upon this passage in Bos-  
u's Admirable treatise of the epick poem, lib. iii. cap. 10.

(says this author) of the arts and sciences as a  
poet ought, we should veil them under names and ac-  
tions of persons fictitious, and allegorical. Homer will  
not plainly say that salt has the virtue to preserve dead  
bodies, and prevent the flies from engendering worms  
in them ; he will not say, that the sea presented Achilles  
a remedy to preserve Patroclus from putrefaction ; but  
he will make the sea a Goddess, and tells us, that The-  
tis to comfort Achilles, engaged to perfume the body  
with an ambrosia which should keep it a whole year  
from corruption : it is thus Homer teaches the po-  
ets to speak of arts and sciences. This example shews the na-  
ture of the things, that flies cause putrefaction, that salt  
preserves bodies from it ; but all this is told us poeti-  
cally, the whole is reduced into action, the sea is made



268 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIX.

Whole years untouched, uninjur'd shall remain  
Fresh as in life, the carcase of the slain.

But go, Achilles, (as affairs require)

35

Before the Grecian peers renounce thine ire:

Then uncontroll'd in boundless war engage,

And Heav'n with strength supply the mighty.<sup>rag</sup>

Then in the nostrils of the slain she pour'd

Nectareous drops, and rich ambrosia show'r'd

40

O'er all the corse. The flies forbid their prey,  
Untouch'd it rests, and sacred from decay.

Achilles to the strand obedient went :

The shores resounded with the voice he sent.

The heroes heard, and all the naval train

45

That tend the ships, or guide them o'er the main,

Alarm'd, transported, at the well-known sound,

Frequent and full, the great assembly crown'd :

Studioius to see that terror of the plain,

Long lost to battle, shine in arms again.

50

Tydides and Ulysses first appear,

Lame with their wounds, and leaning on the spear ;

These on the sacred seats of council plac'd,

The king of men, Atrides came the last :

He too sore wounded by Agenor's son.

55

Achilles (rising in the midst) begun.

Oh Monarch ! better far had been the fate  
Of thee, of me, of all the Grecian state,

" a person who speaks and acts, and this *prosopopoeia* is  
" accompanied with passion, tenderness, and affection ;  
" in a word, there is nothing which is not (according to  
" Aristotle's precept) endued with manners."



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD 269

It, (e'er the day when by mad passion sway'd,  
Rash we contended for the black-ey'd maid) 64  
Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,  
And shot the shining mischief to the heart!  
Then many a hero had not press'd the shore,  
Nor Iroy's glad fields been fatten'd with our gore :  
Long, long shall Greece the woes we caus'd bewail, 65

And sad posterity repeat the tale.  
But this, no more the subject of debate,  
Is past, forgotten, and resign'd to fate :  
Why should (alas) a mortal man, as I,  
Burn with a fury that can never die? 70

v. 61. *Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,  
And shot the shining mischief to the heart !]*

Hilles wishes Briseis had died before she had occasioned great calamities to his countrymen : I will not say to excuse him, that his virtue here overpowers his love, but that the wish is not so very barbarous as it may seem by the phrase to a modern reader. It is not, that Diana had actually killed her, as by a particular stroke or judgment from Heaven ; it means no more than a natural death, as appears from this passage in Odyss. xv.

When age and sicknes have un-nerv'd the strong,  
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along,  
They bend the silver bows for sudden ill,  
And every shining arrow flies to kill.

And he does not wish her death now, after she had been his mistres: but only that she had died, before he knew or loved her.



270 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIX.

Here then my anger ends : let war succeed,  
And ev'n as Greece has bled, let Ilion bleed.  
Now call the hosts, and try, if in our sight  
Troy yet shall dare to camp a second night ? . . . 74  
I deem, their mightiest, when this arm he kn 'ws,  
Shall 'scape with transport, and with joy repose.

He said : his finish'd wrath with loud acclaim  
The Greeks accept, and shout Pelides' name.  
When thus, not rising from his lofty throne,  
In state unmov'd, the king of men begun. 80

Hear me, ye sons of Grcece! with silence hear !  
And grant your monarch an impartial ear ;  
A while your loud, untimely joy suspend,  
And let your rash, injurious clamours end :  
Unruly murmurs, or ill-tim'd applause, 85  
Wrong the best speaker, and the justest cause.  
Nor charge on me, ye Greeks, the dire debate :  
Know, angry Jove, and all-compelling Fate,  
With fell Erinnys, urg'd my wrath that day  
When from Achilles' arms I forc'd the prey. 90  
What then could I, against the will of Heav'n ?  
Not by myself, but vengeful Ate driv'n ;  
She, Jove's dread daughter, fated to infest  
The race of mortals, enter'd in my breast.

v. 93. *She, Jove's dread daughter.]* This speech of Agamemnon, consisting of little else than the long story of Jupiter's casting *Discord* out of heaven, seems odd enough at first sight ; and does not indeed answer what I believe every reader expects, at the conference of these two



Book XIX. HOMER's ILLYAD. 271

Not on the ground that haughty Fury treads, 95  
But prints her lofty footsteps on the heads

princes. Without excusing it from the justness and proper application of the allegory in the present case, I think it a piece of artifice, very agreeable to the character of Agamemnon, which is a mixture of haughtiness and cunning; he cannot prevail with himself any way to lessen the dignity of the royal character, of which he every where appears jealous: something he is obliged to say in publick, and not brooking directly to own himself in the wrong, he slurs it over with this tale. With what stateliness is it that he yields? “I was misled (says he) but I was misled like Jupiter. We invest you with our powers, take our troops and our treasures: our royal promise shall be fulfilled, but be you pacified.”

v. 93. *She, Jove's dread daughter, fated to infect  
The race of mortals—— ——]*

“tars from hence, that the ancients owned a Dæmon, created by God himself, and totally taken up in doing mischief.

This fiction is very remarkable, inasmuch as it proves that the pagans knew that a dæmon of discord and malice was in heaven, and afterwards precipitated to earth, which perfectly agrees with holy history. St. Justin will have it, that Homer attained to the knowledge thereof in Ægypt, and that he had even read what Isaiah writes, chap. xiv.  
*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations?* But our poet could not have seen the prophecy of Isaiah, because he lived 100 or 150 years before that prophet; and this anteriority of time makes this passage the more observable. Homer therein bears au-



272 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XIX.

Of mighty men ; inflicting as she goes  
Long fest'ring wounds, inextricable woes !  
Of old, she stalk'd amid the bright abodes ;  
And Jove himself, the sire of men and Gods, 100  
The world's great ruler, felt her venom'd dart  
Deceiv'd by Juno's wiles, and female art.  
For when Alcmena's nine long months were run,  
And Jove expected his immortal son !  
To Gods and Goddesses th' unruly joy 105  
He show'd, and vaunted of his matchless boy :  
From us (he said) this day an infant springs,  
Fated to rule, and born a king of kings.  
Saturnia ask'd an oath, to vouch the truth,  
And fix'd dominion on the favour'd youth. 110  
The Thund'rer unsuspicuous of the fraud,  
Pronounc'd those solemn words that bind a God.  
The joyful Goddess from Olympus' height,  
Swift to Achaian Argos bent her flight ;  
Scarce seven moons gone, lay Sthenelus's wife ; 115  
She push'd her ling'ring infant into life ;  
Her charms Alcmena's coming labours stay,  
And stop the babe, just issuing to the day.  
Then bids Saturnius bear his oath in mind ;  
" A youth (said she) of Jove's immortal kind 120  
" Is this day born : from Sthenelus he springs,  
" And claims thy promise to be king of kings."

thentick witness to the truth of the story, of an angel thrown from heaven, and gives this testimony above 100 years before one of the greatest prophets spoke of it. Dacier.



**Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 273**

**Grief seiz'd the Thund'rer, by his oath engag'd ;  
Stung to the soul, he sorrow'd, and he rag'd.  
From his ambrosial head, where perch'd the fat,** 125  
**He snatch'd the Fury-Goddess of debate,  
The dread, th' irrevocable oath he swore,  
Th' immortal seats should ne'er behold her more ;  
And whirl'd her headlong down, for ever driv'n  
From bright Olympus and the starry heav'n : 130  
Thence on the nether world the Fury fell ;  
Ordain'd with man's contentious race to dwell.  
Full oft' the God his son's hard toils bemoan'd,  
Curs'd the dire Fury, and in secret groan'd.  
Ev'n thus, like Jove himself, was I misled, 135  
While raging Hector heap'd our camps with dead.  
What can the errors of my rage atone ?  
**M**y martial troops, my treasures are thy own :  
T instant from the navy shall be sent  
Whate'er Ulysses promis'd at thy tent : 140  
But thou ! appeas'd, propitious to our pray'r,  
Resume thy arms, and shine again in war.  
O king of nations ! whose superiour sway  
(Returns Achilles) all our hosts obey !  
To keep or send the presents, be thy care ; 145  
To us, 'tis equal : all we ask is war.  
While yet we talk, or but an instant shun  
The fight, our glorious work remains undone.  
Let ev'ry Greek, who sees my spear confound  
The Trojan ranks, and deal destruction round,**



## 274 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XIX.

With emulation, what I act survey, 151

And learn from thence the business of the day.

The son of Peleus thus : and thus replies  
The great in councils, Ithacus the wise.  
Tho', god-like, thou art by no toils opprest; 155  
At least our armies claim repast and rest :  
Long and laborious must the combat be,  
When by the Gods inspir'd, and led by thee.  
Strength is deriv'd from spirits and from blood,  
And those augment by gen'rous wine and food : 160

v. 145. *To keep or send the presents, be thy care.]* Achilles neither refuses nor demands Agamemnon's presents : the first would be too contemptuous, and the other would look too selfish. It would seem as if Achilles fought only for pay like a mercenary, which would be utterly unbecoming a hero, and dishonourable to that character : Homer is wonderful as to the manners. *Spond. Dac.*

v. 159. *Strength is deriv'd from spirits, &c.]* This advice of Ulysses that the troops should refresh themselves with eating and drinking was extremely necessary after a battle of so long continuance as that of the day before : and Achilles's desire that they should charge the enemy immediately, without any reflection on the necessity of that refreshment, was also highly natural to his violent character. This forces Ulysses to repeat that advice, and insist upon it so much : which those criticks did not see into, who through a false delicacy are shocked at his insisting so warmly upon eating and drinking. Indeed to a common reader, who is more fond of heroick and romantick, than of just and natural images, this at first sight may have an air of ridicule ; but I will venture to say there is nothing ridiculous in the thing itself, nor mean and low



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 275

What boastful son of war, without that stay,  
Can last a hero thro' a single day?

Courage may prompt ; but, ebbing out his strength,  
Mere unsupported man must yield at length ;  
Shrun with dry famine, and with toils declin'd,  
The drooping body will desert the mind : 166

But built a-new with strength-conferring fare,  
With limbs and soul untam'd, he tires a war.

Dismiss the people then, and give command,  
With strong repast to hearten ev'ry band ; 170

But let the presents to Achilles made,  
In full assembly of all Greece be laid.

The king of men shall rise in publick sight,  
And solemn swear, (observant of the rite)  
That spotless as she came, the maid removes, 175  
Pure from his arms, and guiltless of his loves.

At done, a sumptuous banquet shall be made,  
And the full price of injur'd honour paid.

Stretch not henceforth, O prince ! thy sov'reign  
might.

Beyond the bounds of reason and of right ; 180  
'Tis the chief praise that e'er to kings belong'd,  
To right with justice whom with pow'r they  
wrong'd.

in Homer's manner of expressing it : and I believe the  
same of this translation, though I have not softened or  
abated of the idea they are so offended with.



To him the monarch. Just is thy decree,  
Thy words give joy, and wisdom breathes in them.  
Each due atonement gladly I prepare ;      185  
And Heav'n regard me as I justly swear !  
Here then a-while let Greece assembled stay,  
Nor great Achilles grudge this short delay ;  
'Till from the fleet our presents be convey'd,  
And, Jove attesting, the firm compact made.      190  
A train of noble youth the charge shall bear ;  
These to select, Ulysses be thy care :  
In order rank'd let all our gifts appear,  
And the fair train of captives close the rear :  
Talthybius shall the victim boar convey,      195  
Sacred to Jove, and yon' bright orb of day.

For this (the stern Æacides replies)  
Some less important season may suffice,

v. 197. *The stern Æacides replies.] The Greek version,*

Τὸν δὲ ἀπαμειβόμενος ἀρσεφη τόδας Ἀχιλλεύς.

Which is repeated very frequently throughout the Iliad. It is a very just remark of a French critick, that what makes it so much taken notice of, is the rumbling sound and length of the word *ἀπαμειβόμενος* : this is so true, that if in a poem or romance of the same length as the Iliad, we should repeat *The hero answer'd*, full as often, we should never be sensible of that repetition. And if we are not shocked at the like frequency of those expressions in the Æneid, *sic ore refert, talia voce refert, talia dicta dabat, vix ea fatus erat, &c.* it is only because the sound of the Latin words does not fill the ear like that of the Greek *ἀπαμειβόμενος*.



## Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 277

When the stern fury of the war is o'er,  
And death extinguish'd burns my breast no more.

The discourse of the same critick upon these sort of repetitions in general, deserves to be transcribed. That useless nicety (says he) of avoiding every repetition, which the delicacy of latter times has introduced, was not known to the first ages of antiquity : the books of Moses abound with them. Far from condemning their frequent use in the most ancient of all the poets, we should look upon them as the certain character of the age in which he lived, they spoke so in his time, and to have spoken otherwise had been a fault. And indeed nothing is in itself so contrary to the true sublime, as that painful and frivolous exactness, with which we avoid to make use of a proper word because it was used before. It is certain that the Romans were less scrupulous as to this point : you have often in a single page of Tully, the same word five or six times over. If it were really a fault, it is not to be conceived how an autho., who so little wanted variety of expressions as Homer, could be so very negligent herein ? On the contrary, he seems to have affected to repeat the same things in the same words, on many occasions.

It was from two principles equally true, that among several people, and in several ages, two practices entirely different took their rise. Moses, Homer, and the writers of the first times, had found that repetitions of the same words recalled the ideas or things, imprinted them much more strongly, and rendered the discourse more intelligible. Upon this principle, the custom of repeating words, phrases, and even entire speeches, insensibly established itself both in prose and poetry, especially in narrations.

The writers who succeeded them observed, even from Homer himself, that the greatest beauty of style consisted in variety. This they made their principle: they therefore avoided repetitions of words, and still more of whole



278 HOMER's ILIAD Book XIX.

By Hector slain, their faces to the sky,  
All grim with gaping wounds our heroes lie. 201

sentences ; they endeavoured to vary their transitions : and found out new turns and manners of expressin the same things.

Either of these practices is good, but the excess of either vicious : we should neither on the one hand, through a love of simplicity and clearness, continually repeat the same words, phrases, or discourses ; nor on the other, for the pleasure of variety, fall into a childish affectation of expressing every thing twenty different ways, though it be never so natural and common.

Nothing so much cools the warmth of a piece, or puts out the fire of poetry, as that perpetual care to vary incessantly, even in the smallest circumstances. In this, as in many other points, Homer has despised the ungrateful labour of too scrupulous a nicety. He has done like a great painter, who does not think himself obliged to vary all his pieces to that degree, as not one of them shall have the least resemblance to another : if the principal figures are entirely different, we easily excuse a resemblance in the landscapes, the skies, or the draperies. Suppose a gallery full of pictures, each of which represents a particular subject : in one I see Aehilles in fury, menacing Agamemnon ; in another the same hero with regret delivers up Briseïs to the heralds ; in a third it is still Achilles, but Achilles overcome with grief, and lamenting to his mother. If the air, the gesture, the countenance, the character of Achilles, are the same in each of these three pieces : if the ground of one of these be the same with that of the others in the composition and general design, whether it be landscape or architecture ; then indeed one should have reason to blame the painter for the uniformity of his figures and grounds. But if there be no sameness but in the folds of



## Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 279

Those call to war ! and might my voice incite,  
Now, now, this instant, shou'd commence the fight :  
Then, when' the day's complete, let gen'rous bowls,  
And copious banquets, glad your weary souls. 206  
Let no : my palate know the taste of food,  
'Till my insatiate rage be cloy'd with blood :  
Pale lies my friend, with wounds disfigur'd o'er,  
And his cold feet are pointed to the door. 210

a few draperies, in the structure of some part of a building, or in the figure of some tree, mountain, or cloud, it is what no one would regard as a fault. The application is obvious : Homer repeats, but they are not the great strokes which he repeats, not those which strike and fix our attention ; they are only the little parts, the transitions, the general circumstances, or familiar images, which recur naturally, and upon which the reader but casts his eye carelessly : such as the descriptions of sacrifices, repasts, or embarkments ; such in short, as are in their own nature much the same, which it is sufficient just to shew, and which are in a manner incapable of different ornaments.

v. 209. *Pale lies my friend, &c.]* It is in the Greek, *lies extended in my tent with his face turning towards the door,* *ἀνα περιθυέτω τείχαμμένος*, that is to say, as the scholiast has explained it, *having his feet turned towards the door*. For it was thus the Greeks placed their dead in the porches of their houses, as likewise in Italy.

“ In portam rigidos calces extendit.” *Perfus.*  
“ Recepitque ad limina gressum,  
“ Corpus ubi exanimi positum Pallantis Acetes  
“ Servabat senior”—

Thus we are told by Suetonius, of the body of Augustus  
*Equester ordo suscepit, urbique intulit, atque in vestibulo domus collocavit.*



## 280 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIX.

Revenge is all my soul ! no meaner care,  
Int'rest, or thought, has room to harbour there  
Destruction be my feast, and mortal wounds,  
And scenes of blood, and agonizing sounds

O first of Greeks (Ulysses thus rejoin'd) 215  
The best and bravest of the warriour-kind !  
Thy praise it is in dreadful camps to shine,  
But old experience and calm wisdom, mine.  
Then hear my counsel, and to reason yield,  
The bravest soon are satiate of the field ; 220  
Tho' vast the heaps that strow the crimson plain,  
The bloody harvest brings but little gain :  
The scale of conquest ever wav'ring lies,  
Great Jove but turns it, and the victor dies !  
The great, the bold, by thousands daily fall, 225  
And endless were the grief, to weep for all.  
Eternal sorrows what avails to shed ?  
Greece honours not with solemn fasts the dead :  
Enough, when death demands the brave to pay  
The tribute of a melancholy day. 230  
One chief with patience to the grave resign'd,  
Our care devolves on others left behind.

v. 221. *Tho' vast the heaps, &c.*] Ulysses's expression in the original is very remarkable ; he calls *καλάμην*, straw or chaff, such as are killed in the battle ; and he calls *ἄμηλον*, the crop, such as make their escape. This is very conformable to the language of holy scripture, wherein those who perish are called chaff, and those who are saved are called corn. *Dacier.*



**Book XIX.**      H O M E R's I L I A D.      281

Let gen'rous food supplies of strength produce,  
Let rising spirits flow from sprightly juice,  
Let their warm heads with scenes of battle glow,  
And pour new furies on the feebler foe. 236

Yet a short interval, and none shall dare  
Expect a second summons to the war;  
Who waits for that, the dire effect shall find,  
If trembling in the ships he lags behind.      240  
Embodied, to the battle let us bend,  
And all at once on haughty Troy descend,

And now the delegates Ulysses sent,  
To bear the presents from the royal tent.  
The sons of Nestor, Phyleus' valiant heir,  
Thias and Merion, thunderbolts of war,  
With Lycomedes of Creiontian strain,  
And Melanippus, form'd the chosen train.  
Swift as the word was giv'n, the youths obey'd ;  
Twice ten bright vases in the midst they laid ;  
A row of six fair tripods then succeeds ;  
And twice the number of high-bounding steeds ;

v. 237. — — — *None shall dare*  
*Expect a second summons to the war.]*

This is very artful; Ulysses, to prevail upon Achilles to let the troops take repast, and yet in some sort to second his impatience, gives with the same breath orders for battle, by commanding the troops to march, and expect no farther orders. Thus though the troops go to take repast, it looks as if they do not lose a moment's time, but are going to put themselves in array of battle. *Dacier.*



282 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIX.

Sev'n captives next a lovely line compose ;  
The eighth Briseïs, like the blooming rose,  
Clas'd the bright band : great Ithacus, before, 259  
First of the train, the golden talents bore :  
The rest in publick view the chiefs dispose,  
A splendid scene ! then Agamemnon rose :  
The boar Talthybius held : the Grecian lord  
Drew the broad cutlass sheath'd beside his fword :  
The stubborn bristles from the victim's brow 261  
He crops, and off'ring meditates his vow.  
His hands uplifted to th' attesting skies,  
On Heav'n's broad marble roof were fix'd his eyes,  
The solemn words a deep attention draw, 265  
And Greece around sat thrill'd with sacred awe.

Witness thou first ! thou greatest Pow'r above !  
All-good, all-wise, and all-surveying Jove !  
And Mother-earth, and Heav'n's revolving light,  
And ye, fell Furies of the realms of night, 270  
Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare  
For perjur'd kings, and all who falsely swear !  
The black-ey'd maid inviolate removes,  
Pure and unconscious of my manly loves.  
If this be false, Heav'n all its vengeance shed, 275  
And levell'd thunder strike my guilty head !

With that, his weapon deep inflicts the wound ;  
The bleeding savage tumbles to the ground ;



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 283

The sacred herald rolls the victim slain  
(A ~~feast~~ for fish) into the foaming main. 280

nen thus Achilles. Hear, ye Greeks ! and know  
What~~ever~~ we feel, 'tis Jove inflicts the woe:  
Not else Atrides could our rage inflame,  
Nor from my arms, unwilling, force the dame.  
'Twas Jove's high will alone, o'er-ruling all, 285  
That doom'd our strife, and doom'd the Greeks to  
fall.

Go then, ye chiefs ! indulge the genial rite ;  
Achilles waits ye, and expects the fight.

The speedy council at his word adjourn'd :  
To their black vefels all the Greeks return'd. 290  
Achilles sought his tent. His train before  
March'd onward, bending with the gifts they bore.  
Those in the tents the 'squires industrious spread :  
The foaming coursers to the stalls they led ;  
To their new seats the female captives move : 295  
Briseïs, radiant as the queen of love,

v. 279. *Rolls the victim into the foaming main.]* For it was not lawful to eat the flesh of the victims that were sacrificed in confirmation of oaths ; such were victims of malediction. *Eustathius.*

v. 281. *Hear, ye Greeks, &c.]* Achilles, to let them see that he is entirely appeased, justifies Agamemnon himself, and enters into the reasons with which that prince had coloured his fault. But in that justification he perfectly well preserves his character, and illustrates the advantage he has over that king who offended him. *Dacier.*



## 284 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XIX

Slow as the past, beheld with sad survey  
Where gash'd with cruel wounds, Patroclus lay  
Prone on the body fell the heav'nly fair,  
Beat her sad breast, and tore her golden hair ; 300  
All beautiful in grief, her humid eyes  
Shining with tears she lifts, and thus she cries.

Ah youth for ever dear, for ever kind,  
Once tender friend of my distracted mind !  
I left thee fresh in life, in beauty gay ; 305  
Now find thee cold, inanimated clay !  
What woes my wretched race of life attend ?  
Sorrows on sorrows, never doom'd to end !  
The first lov'd comfort of my virgin-bed  
Before these eyes in fatal battle bled ! 310  
My three brave brothers in one mournful day,  
All trod the dark, irremovable way :  
Thy friendly hand uprear'd me from the plain,  
And dry'd my sorrows for a husband slain ;

v. 303, &c. *The lamentation of Briseïs over Patroclus.]* This speech (says Dionysius of Halicarnassus) is not without its artifice : while Briseïs seems only to be deplored Patroclus, she represents to Achilles, who stands by, the breach of the promises he had made her, and upbraids him with the neglect he had been guilty of in resigning her up to Agamemnon. He adds, that Achilles hereupon acknowledges the justice of her complaint, and makes answer that his promises should be performed : it was a slip in that great critick's memory, for the verse he cites is not in this part of the author, [περὶ τοχητικῶν Part II.]



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 285

Achilles' care you promis'd I should prove, 315

The first, the dearest partner of his love;

That rites divine should ratify the band,

And make me empress in his native land.

Accept these grateful tears ! for thee they flow,

For thee, that ever felt another's woe ! 320

Her sister captives echo'd groan for groan,  
Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.

The leaders press'd the chief on every side ;

Unmov'd, he heard them, and with sighs deny'd.

v. 315. *Achilles' care you promis'd, &c.]* In these days when our manners are so different from those of the antients, and we see none of those dismal catastrophes which laid whole kingdoms waste, ~~and~~ subjected princesses and queens to the power of the conqueror ; it will perhaps seem astonishing, that a princess of Briseis's birth, the very day that her father, brothers, and husband were killed by Achilles, should suffer herself to be comforted, and even flattered with the hopes of becoming the spouse of the murderer. But such were the manners of those times, as antient history testifies : and a poet represents them as they were ; but if there was a necessity for justifying them, it might be said that slavery was at that time so terrible, that in truth a princess like Briseis was pardonable, to chuse rather to become Achilles's wife than his slave. *Dacier.*

v. 322. *Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.]* Homer adds this touch to heighten the character of Briseis, and to shew the difference there was between her and the other captives. Briseis, as a well-born princess, really bewailed Patroclus out of *gratitude* ; but the others, by pretense to bewail him, wept only out of *interest*. *Dacier.*



286 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XIX.

If yet Achilles have a friend, whose care 325  
Is bent to please him, this request forbear :  
'Till yonder sun descend, ah let me pay  
To grief and anguish one abstemious day.

He spoke, and from the warriours turn'd his face:  
Yet still the brother-kings of Atreus' race, 330  
Nestor, Idomeneus, Ulysses sage,  
And Phœnix, strive to calm his grief and rage :  
His rage they calm not, nor his grief controul ;  
He groans, he raves, he sorrows from his soul.

Thou too, Patroclus ! (thus his heart he vents) 335  
Once spread th' inviting banquet in our tents :  
Thy sweet society, thy winning care,  
Once staid Achilles, running to the war.  
But now alas ! to death's cold arms resign'd,  
What banquet but revenge can glad my mind ?  
What greater sorrow could afflict my breast, .341  
What more, if hoary Peleus were deceas'd ?  
Who now, perhaps, in Phthia dreads to hear  
His son's sad fate, and drops a tender tear.  
What more, should Neoptolemus the brave 345  
(My only offspring) sink into the grave ?

v. 335. *Thou too, Patroclus ! &c.]* This lamentation is finely introduced : while the generals are persuading him to take some refreshment, it naturally awakens in his mind the remembrance of Patroclus, who had so often brought him food every morning before they went to battle : this is very natural, and admirably well conceals the art of drawing the subject of his discourse from the things that present themselves. *Spondanus.*



## Book XIX. HOMER's ILIA D.

287

If yet that offspring lives, (I distant far,  
Of all neglectful, wage a hateful war.)  
I wou'd not this, this cruel stroke attend ;  
Fate claim'd Achilles, but might spare his friend.

I hop'd Patroclus might survive, to rear  
My tender orphan with a parent's care,  
From Scyros isle conduct him o'er the main,  
And glad his eyes with his paternal reign,  
The lofty palace, and the large domain.      351 }  
The lofty palace, and the large domain.      355 }

For Peleus breathes no more the vital air ;  
Or drags a wretched life of age and care,  
But 'till the news of my sad fate invades  
His hastening soul, and sinks him to the shades.

Sighing he said : his grief the heroes join'd, 360  
Each stole a tear for what he left behind.  
Their mingled grief the Sire of heav'n survey'd,  
And thus, with pity, to his blue-ey'd Maid.

Is then Achilles now no more thy care,  
And dost thou thus desert the great in war ? 364  
Lo, where yon' sails their canvas wings extend,  
All comfortless he sits, and wails his friend :

v. 351. *I hop'd Patroclus might survive, &c.]* Patroclus was young, and Achilles who had but a short time to live, hoped that after his death his dear friend would be as a father to his son, and put him into the possession of his kingdom : Neoptolemus would in Patroclus find Peleus and Achilles ; whereas when Patroclus was dead, he must be an orphan indeed. Homer is particularly admirable for the sentiments, and always follows nature. *Dacier.*



E'er thirst and want his forces have opprest,  
Haste and infuse ambrosia in his breast.

369

He spoke; and sudden at the word of Jove,  
Shot the descending Goddess from above.  
So swift thro' æther the shrill Harpy springs,  
The wide air floating to her ample wings.  
To great Achilles she her flight addreſt,  
And pour'd divine ambrosia in his breast,  
With nectar sweet, (refeſtion of the Gods !)  
Then, swift ascending, fought the bright abodes.

375

Now issued from the ships the warriour-train,  
And like a deluge pour'd upon the plain.

As when the piercing blasts of Boreas blow,  
And scatter o'er the fields the driving snow ;  
From dusky clouds the fleecy winter flies,  
Whose dazzling lustre whitens all the skies :  
So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields  
Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields ;

385

v. 384. *So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields  
Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields.]*

It is probable the reader may think the words *shining*, *splendid*, and others derived from the lustre of arms, too frequent in these books. My author is to answer for it; but it may be alledged in his excuse, that when it was the custom for every soldier to serve in armour, and when those arms were of brass before the use of iron became common, these images of lustre were less avoidable, and more necessarily frequent in descriptions of his nature.



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ILIAD. 289

Broad-glitt'ring breast-plates, spears with pointed  
rays,

Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze :

Thick beats the center as the coursers bound,

With splendour flame the skies, and laugh the fields  
around.

Full in the midst, high-tow'ring o'er the rest,  
His limbs in arms divine Achilles dreft; 391

Arms which the Father of the fire bestow'd,  
Forg'd on th' eternal anvils of the God.

Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,  
His glowing eye-balls roll with living fire ; 395  
He grinds his teeth, and furious with delay  
O'erlooks th' embattled host, and hopes the bloody  
day.

The silver cuishes first his thighs infold :  
Then o'er his breast was brac'd the hollow gold :  
The brazen sword a various baldrick ty'd, 400  
That, starr'd with gems, hung glitt'ring at his side ,  
And like the moon, the broad resplendent shield  
Blaz'd with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the field.

v. 390. *Achilles arming himself, &c.]* There is a wonderful pomp in this description of Achilles arming himself; every reader without being pointed to it, will see the extreme grandeur of all these images; but what is particular, is, in what a noble scale they rise one above another, and how the hero is set still in a stronger point of light than before; till he is at last in a manner



290 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XIX.

So to night-wand'ring sailors, pale with fears,  
Wide o'er the wat'ry waste, a light appears, 405  
Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,  
Streams from some lonely watch-tow'r to the sky :  
With mournful eyes they gaze, and gaze again ;  
Loud howls the storm, and drives them o'er the  
main.

Next, his high head the helmet grac'd ; behind  
The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind: 411  
Like the red star, that from his flaming hair  
Shakes down diseases, pestilence and war ;  
So stream'd the golden honours from his head,  
Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose glo-  
ries shed. 415

The chief beholds himself with wond'ring eyes ;  
His arms he poises, and his motions tries :  
Buoy'd by some inward force, he seems to swim,  
And feels a pinion lifting every limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear, 420  
Pond'rous and huge ! which not a Greek could rear.  
From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire  
Old Chiron fell'd, and shap'd it for his fire ;  
A spear which stern Achilles only wields,  
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields : 425

Automedon and Alcimus prepare  
Th' immortal coursers, and the radiant car,

covered over with glories : he is at first likened to the  
moon-light, then to the flames of a beacon, then to a co-  
met, and lastly to the sun itself.



Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 291

(The silver traces sweeping at their side)  
Their fiery mouths resplendent bridles ty'd,  
The iv'ry-studded reins, return'd behind, 430  
Wav'd o'er their backs, and to the chariot join'd.  
The charioteer then whirl'd the lash around,  
And swift ascended at one active bound.  
All bright in heav'nly arms, above his squire  
Achilles mounts, and sets the field on fire ; 435  
Not brighter Phœbus in th' ethereal way,  
Flames from his chariot, and restores the day.  
High o'er the host all terrible he stands,  
And thunders to his steeds these dread commands.

Xanthus and Balius ! of Podarges' strain, 440  
(Unless ye boast that heav'nly race in vain)  
Be swift, be mindful of the load ye bear,  
And bear 'o make your master more your care :  
Thro' falling squadrons bear my slaugt'ring sword,  
Nor, as ye left Patroclus, leave your lord. 445

The gen'rous Xanthus, as the words he said,  
Seem'd sensible of woe, and droop'd his head :  
Trembling he stood before the golden wain,  
And bow'd to dust the honours of his mane,  
When, strange to tell ! (so Juno will'd) he broke 451  
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.

v. 450. When, strange to tell ! (so Juno will'd) he broke  
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.]

It is remarked, in excuse of this extravagant fiction of a horse speaking, that Homer was authorised herein by



## 292 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XIX.

Achilles ! yes ! this day at least we bear  
Thy rage in safety thro' the files of war :

fable, tradition, and history. Livy makes mention of two oxen that spoke on different occasions, and recites the speech of one, which was *Roma cave tibi*. Pliny tells us, these animals were particularly gifted this way, I. viii. c. 45. *Est frequens in prodigiis priscorum, bovem locutum.* Besides, Homer had prepared us for expecting something miraculous from these horses of Achilles, by representing them to be immortal. We have seen them already sensible, and weeping at the death of Patroclus : and we must add to all this, that a Goddess is concerned in working this wonder : it is Juno that does it. Oppian alludes to this in a beautiful passage of his first book : not having the original by me, I shall quote (what I believe is no less beautiful) Mr. Fenton's translation of it :

Of all the prone creation, none display  
A friendlier sense of man's superior way  
Some in the silent pomp of grief complain,  
For the brave chief, by doom of battle slain :  
And when young Peleus in his rapid car  
Rush'd on, to rouse the thunder of the war,  
With human voice inspir'd, his steed deplor'd  
The fate impending dreadful o'er his lord.

Cyneg. lib. i.

Spondanus and Dacier fail not to bring up Balaam's asfs on this occasion. But methinks the commentators are at too much pains to discharge the poet from the imputation of extravagant fiction, by accounting for wonders of this kind : I am afraid, that next to the extravagance of inventing them, is that of endeavouring to reconcile such fictions to probability. Would not one general answer do better, to say once for all, that the above-cited authors lived in the age of wonders : the taste of the world has



## Book XIX. HOMER's ILIAD. 293

But come it will, the fatal time must come,  
Not our's the fault, but God decrees thy doom. 455  
Not thro' our crime, or flowness in the course,  
Fall thy Patroclus, but by heav'nly force ;  
The bright far-shooting God who gilds the day,  
(Confest we saw him) tore his arms away.  
No—could our swiftness o'er the winds prevail,  
Or beat the pinions of the western gale, 461  
All were in vain—the Fates thy death demand,  
Due to a mortal and immortal hand.

Then ceas'd for ever, by the Furies ty'd,  
His fate-ful voice. Th' intrepid chief reply'd 465  
With unabated rage—So let it be !  
Portents and prodigies are lost on me.  
I know my fate:: to die, to see no more  
~~My~~ ~~my~~ parents, and my native shore—  
Enough—when Heav'n ordains, I sinkin night ; 470  
Now perish Troy ! he said, and rush'd to fight.

been generally turned to the miraculous ; wonders were what the people would have, and what not only the poets, but the priests, gave them.

v. 464. *Then ceas'd for ever, by the Furies ty'd,  
His fate-ful voice.—]*

The poet had offended against probability if he had made Juno take away the voice ; for Juno (which signifies the air) is the cause of the voice. Besides, the poet was willing to intimate that the privation of the voice is a thing so dismal and melancholy, that none but the Furies can take upon them, o cruel an employment. *Eustathius.*



**T H E**  
**T W E N T I E T H      B O O K**  
**O F    T H E**  
**I      L      I      A      D.**



## THE A . R G U M E N T .

The battle of the Gods, and the acts of Achilles.

JUPITER upon Achilles's return to the battle, calls a council of the Gods, and permits them to assist either party. The terrors of the combat described, when the Deities are engaged. Apollo encourages Æneas to meet Achilles. After a long conversation, these two heroes encounter ; but Æneas is preserved by the assistance of Neptune. Achilles falls upon the rest of the Trojans, and is upon the point of killing Hector, but Apollo conveys him away in a cloud. Achilles pursues the Trojans with a great slaughter.

The same day continues. The scene is in the field before Troy.



THE  
TWENTIETH BOOK  
OF THE  
ILIA D.

**T**HUS round Pelides breathing war and blood,  
Greece sheath'd in arms, beside her vessels  
stood;

While new impending from a neighb'ring height,  
Troy's black battalions wait the shock of fight.  
Then Jove to Themis gives command, to call      5  
The Gods to council in the starry hall :

v. 5. *Then Jove to Themis gives command, &c.]* The poet is now to bring his hero again into action, and he introduces him with the utmost pomp and grandeur : the Gods are assembled only upon this account, and Jupiter permits several Deities to join with the Trojans, and hinder Achilles from over-ruling destiny itself.

The circumstance of sending Themis to assemble the Gods is very beautiful ; she is the Goddess of justice ; the Trojans by the rape of Helen, and by repeated perjuries having broken her laws, she is the properest messenger to summon 'em to bring them to punishment. *Eustathius.*



298 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XX.

Swift o'er Olympus' hundred hills she flies,  
And summons all the senate of the skies.  
These shining on, in long procession come  
To Jove's eternal adamantine dome.      10

Not one was absent, not a rural pow'r,  
That haunts the verdant gloom, or rosy bow'r,  
Each fair-hair'd Dryad of the shady wood,  
Each azure Sister of the silver flood ;  
All but old Ocean, hoary Sire ! who keeps      15  
His ancient seat beneath the sacred deeps.

Proclus has given a farther explanation of this. Themis or Justice (says he) is made to assemble the Gods round Jupiter, because it is from him that all the powers of nature take their virtue, and receive their orders ; and Jupiter sends them to the relief of both parties, to shew that nothing falls out but by his permission, and that neither angels, nor men, nor the elements, act but according to the power which is given them.

v. 15. *All but old Ocean.*] Eustathius gives two reasons why Oceanus was absent from this assenbly : the one is because he is fabled to be the original of all the Gods, and it would have been a piece of indecency for him to see the Deities, who were all his descendants, war upon one another by joining adverse parties : the other reason he draws from the allegory of Oceanus, which signifies the element of water, and consequently the whole element could not ascend into the Æther ; but whereas Neptune, the rivers, and the fountains are said to have been present, this is no way impossible, if we consider it in an allegorical sense, which implies, that the rivers, seas, and fountains supply the air with vapours, and by that means ascend into the æther.



Book XX. HOMER's ILIA D. 299

On marble thrones with lucid columns crown'd,  
(The work of Vulcan) sat the pow'rs around.  
Ev'n \* he whose trident fways the wat'ry reign,  
Heard the loud summons, and forsook the main, 20  
Affum'd his throne amid the bright abodes,  
And question'd thus the fire of men and Gods.

What moves the God who heav'n and earth com-  
mands,

And grasps the thunder in his awful hands,  
Thus to convene the whole æthereal state ? 25  
Is Greece and Troy the subject in debate ?  
Already met, the low'ring hosts appear,  
And death stands ardent on the edge of war.

"Tis true (the cloud-compelling Pow'r replies)  
This day, we call the council of the skies 30  
In care of human race ; ev'n Jove's own eye  
Sees with regret unhappy mortals die.  
Far on Olympus' top in secret state  
Ourself will sit, and see the hand of Fate  
Work out our will. Celestial Pow'rs ! descend, 35  
And as your minds direct, your succour lend

v. 35. *Celestial pow'rs ! descend,  
And as your minds direct, your succour lend  
To either host.]*

Eustathius informs us, that the antients were very much divided upon this passage of Homer. Some have criticized

Neptune.



## 200 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XX

To either host. Troy soon must lie o'erthrown,  
If uncontroll'd Achilles fights alone:  
Their troops but lately durst not meet his eyes;  
What can they now, if in his rage he rise? 40  
Afflict them, Gods! or Ilion's sacred wall  
May fall this day, tho' Fate forbids the fall.

it, and others have answered their criticism; but he reports nothing more than the objection, without transmitting the answer to us. Those who condemned Homer, said Jupiter was for the Trojans; he saw the Greeks were the strongest, so permitted the Gods to declare themselves, and go to the battle. But herein that God is deceived, and does not gain his point; for the Gods who favour the Greeks being stronger than those who favour the Trojans, the Greeks will still have the same advantage. I do not know what answer the partisans of Homer made, but for my part, I think this objection is more ingenious than valid. Jupiter does not pretend that the Trojans should be stronger than the Greeks, he has only a mind that the decree of destiny should be executed. Destiny had refused to Achilles the glory of taking Troy, but if Achilles fights singly against the Trojans, he is capable of forcing destiny; (as Homer has already elsewhere said, that there had been brave men who had done so). Whereas if the Gods took part, though those who followed the Grecians were stronger than those who were for the Trojans, the latter would however be strong enough to support destiny, and to hinder Achilles from making himself master of Troy: this was Jupiter's sole view. Thus is this passage far from being blameable, it is on the contrary very beautiful, and infinitely glorious for Achilles. *Dacier.*

v. 41. — — — Or Ilion's sacred wall  
May fall this day, tho' Fate forbids the fall.]



Book XX. HOMER'S ILIAD. 301

He said, and fir'd their heav'nly breasts with rage :  
On adverse parts the warring Gods engage.

Mons. de la Motte criticizes on this passage, as thinking it absurd and contradictory to Homer's own system, to imagine, that what Fate had ordained should not come to pass. Jupiter here seems to fear that Troy will be taken this very day in spite of destiny, *ιντὶς μόχον*. M. Boivin answers, that the explication hereof depends wholly upon the principles of the ancient Pagan theology, and their doctrine concerning Fate. It is certain, according to Homer and Virgil, that what destiny had decreed did not constantly happen in the precise time marked by destiny; the fatal moment was not to be retarded, but might be hastened: for example, that of the death of Dido was advanced by the blow she gave herself; her hour was not then come.

— — “Nec fato, meritā nec morte péribat,  
“Sed rūsera ante diem” —

Every violent death was accounted *ιντὶς μόχον*, that is, before the fated time, or (which is the same thing) against the natural order, *turbato mortalitatis ordine*, as the Romans expressed it. And the same might be said of any misfortunes which men drew upon themselves by their own ill conduct. (See the note on v. 535. lib. xvi.) In a word, it must be allowed that it was not easy, in the Pagan religion to form the justest ideas upon a doctrine so difficult to be cleared; and upon which it is no great wonder if a poet should not always be perfectly consistent with himself, when it has puzzled such a number of divines and philosophers.

“v. 44. On adverse parts the warring Gods engage.  
Heav'n's aw'ful Queen, &c.]

Eustathius has a very curious remark upon this division of the Gods of Homer, which M. Dacier has entirely bor-



## 302 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Heav'n's awful Queen ; and he whole <sup>arm'd</sup> round

45

Girds the vast globe ; the Maid in arms renown'd ;  
Hermes of profitable arts the fire ;  
And Vulcan, the black sov'reign of the fire !  
These to the fleet repair with instant flight :  
The vessels tremble as the Gods alight.

50

rowed (as indeed no commentator ever borrowed more, or acknowledged less, than she has every where done from Euftathius.) This division, says he, is not made at random, but founded upon very solid reasons, drawn from the nature of those two nations. He places on the side of the Greeks all the Gods who preside over arts and sciences, to signify how much in that respect the Greeks excelled all other nations. Juno, Pallas, Neptune, Mercury, and Vulcan are for the Greeks ; Juno, not only as the Goddess who presides over marriage, and who is concerned to revenge an injury done to the nuptial bed, but likewise as the Goddess who represents monarchical government, which was better established in Greece than anywhere else ; Pallas, because being the Goddess of war and wisdom, she ought to assist those who are wronged ; besides the Greeks understood the art of war better than the Barbarians ; Neptune because he was an enemy to the Trojans upon account of Laomedon's perfidiousness, and because most of the Greeks being come from islands or peninsulas, were in some sort his subjects ; Mercury, because he is a God who presides over stratagems of war, and because Troy was taken by that of the wooden horse ; and lastly, Vulcan, as the declared enemy of Mars and of all adulterers, and as the father of arts.



In aid of Troy, Latona, Phœbus came,  
Mars fiery-helm'd, the laughter-loving Dame,  
Xanthus whose streams in golden currents flow,  
And the chaste Huntress of the silver bow.

E'er yet the Gods their various aid employ,  
Each Argive bosom swell'd with manly joy,  
While great Achilles, (terrour of the plain)  
Long lost to battle, shone in arms again.

55

Dreadful he stood in front of all his host ;  
Pale Troy beheld, and seem'd already lost ;  
Her bravest heroes pant with inward fear,  
And trembling see another God of war.

60

But when the pow'rs descending swell'd the fight,  
Then tumult rose ; fierce rage and pale affright  
Vary'd each face ; then Discord sounds alarms, 65  
Earth echoes, and the nations rush to arms.

Now thro' the trembling shores Minerva calls,  
And now she thunders from the Grecian walls.  
Mars hov'ring o'er his Troy, his terrour shrouds  
In gloomy tempests, and a night of clouds ; 70

70

v. 52. *Mars fiery-helm'd, the Laughter-loving Dame.*] The reasons why Mars and Venus engage for the Trojans, are very obvious ; the point in hand was to favour ravishers and debauchees. But the same reason, you will say, does not serve for Apollo, Diana, and Latona. It is urged that Apollo is for the Trojans, because of the darts and arrows which were the principal strength of the Barbarians ; and Diana, because she presided over dancing, and those Barbarians were great dancers : and Latona, as influenced by her children. Xanthus being a Trojan river, is interested for his country. *Eustathius.*



304 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Now thro' each Trojan heart he fury pours  
With voice divine, from Ilion's topmost tow'rs ;  
Now shouts to Simois from her beauteous hill ;  
The mountain shook, the rapid stream stood still.  
Above, the Sire of Gods his thunder rolls. 75  
And peals on peals redoubled rend the pales.

v. 75. *Above, the Sire of Gods, &c.]* “ The images (says Longinus) which Homer gives of the combat of the Gods, have in them something prodigiously great and magnificent. We see in these verses, the earth opened to its very center, hell ready to disclose itself, the whole machine of the world upon the point to be destroyed and overturned : to shew that in such a conflict, heaven and hell, all things mortal and immortal, the whole creation in short was engaged in this battle, and all the extent of nature in danger.”

“ Non secus ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens  
“ Infernas referet sedes & regna recludat  
“ Pallida, Diis invisa, superque immane barathrum  
“ Cernatur, trepidantque immenso lumine manes.”

Virgil.

Madam Dacier rightly observes that this copy is inferior to the original on this account, that Virgil has made a comparison of that which Homer made an action. This occasions an infinite difference, which is easy to be perceived.

One may compare with this noble passage of Homer, the battle of the Gods and giants in Hesiod's Theogony, which is one of the sublimest parts of that author, and Milton's battle of the angels in the sixth book : the elevation, and enthusiasm of our great countryman seems owing to this original.



Book XX. HOMER'S ILIAD. 303

Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground,  
The forests wave, the mountains nod around;  
Thro' all their summits tremble Ida's woods,  
And from their sources boil their hundred floods. 80  
Troy's tuftets totter on the rocking plain;  
And the totter'd navies beat the heaving main.  
Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,  
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head,  
Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should  
lay 85

His dark dominions open to the day,  
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,  
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to Gods.

Such war th' immortals wage: such horrors tend  
The world's vast concave, when the Gods contend.  
First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain 91  
Against blue Neptune, monarch of the main:  
The God of arms his giant bulk display'd,  
Oppos'd to Pallas, war's triumphant Maid.

v. 91. *First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain, &c.]* With what art does the poet engage the Gods in this conflict! Neptune opposes Apollo, which implies that things moist and dry are in continual discord: Pallas fights with Mars, which signifies that rashness and wisdom always disagree: Juno is against Diana, that is, nothing more differs from a marriage state, than celibacy: Vulcan engages Xanthus, then as fire and water are in perpetual variance. Thus we have a fine allegory concealed under the veil of excellent poetry, and the reader receives a double satisfaction at the same time from beautiful verses, and an instructive moral. *Eustathius.*



## 306 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Against Latona march'd the son of Jove ! 25

The quiver'd Dian, sister of the Day,

(Her golden arrows sounding at her side)

Saturnia, majesty of heav'n, defy'd.

With fiery Vulcan last in battle stands

The sacred flood that rolls on golden sands ; 100

Xanthus his name with those of heav'nly birth,

But call'd Scamander by the sons of earth.

While thus the Gods in various league eng'ge,

Achilles glow'd with more than mortal rage :

Hector he sought ; in search of Hector turn'd 105

His eyes around, for Hector only burn'd ;

And burst like light'ning thro' the ranks, and vow'd

To glut the God of battles with his blood.

Æneas was the first who dar'd to stay ;

Apollo wedg'd him in the warriour's way, 110

But swell'd his bosom with undaunted might,

Half-forc'd, and half-persuaded to the fight.

Like young Lycaon, of the royal line,

In voice and aspect, seem'd the Pow'r divine ;

And bade the chief reflect, how late with scorn 115

In distant threats he brav'd the Goddess-born.

Then thus the hero of Anchises' strain.

To meet Pelides you persuade in vain :

Already have I met, nor void of fear

Observ'd the fury of his flying spear ; 120

v. 119. *Already have I met, &c.*] Eustathius remarks that the poet lets no opportunity pass of inserting into his poem the actions that preceded the tenth year of the war,



Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 307

From Ida's woods he chas'd us to the field,  
Our force he scatter'd, and our herds he kill'd ;  
Lyrnessus, Pedasus in ashes lay ;  
But (Jove assisting) I surviv'd the day.

Else had I sunk opprest in fatal fight, 125  
By fierce A. hilles and Minerva's might.

Where'er he mov'd, the Godde's shone before,  
And batl d his brazen lance in hostile gore.

What mortal man Achilles can sustain ?

Th' immortals guard him thro' the dreadful plain, }  
And suffer not his dart to fall in vain. 131 }

Were God my aid, this arm should check his pow'r,  
Tho' strong in battle as a brazen tow'r.

especially the actions of Achilles the hero of it. In this place he brings in Æneas extolling the bravery of his enemy, and confessing himself to have formerly been vanquished by him : at the same time he preserves a piece of antient history, by inserting into the poem the hero's conquest of Pedasus and Lyrnessus.

121. *From Ida's woods he chas'd us—*  
*But (Jove assisting) I surviv'd.]*

It is remarkable that Æneas owed his safety to his flight from Achilles; but it may seem strange that Achilles, who was so famed for his swiftness, should not be able to overtake him, even with Minerva for his guide. Eustathius answers, that this might proceed from the better knowledge Æneas might have of the ways and defiles: Achilles being a stranger, and Æneas having long kept his father's flocks in those parts.

He farther observes, that the word φάθος discovers that it was in the night that Achilles pursued Æneas.



To whom the son of Jove. That God implore.  
And be, what great Achilles was before. 135  
From heav'nly Venus thou deriv'st thy strain,  
And he, but from a sister of the main :  
An aged Sea-god, father of his line,  
But Jove himself the sacred source of thine.  
Then lift thy weapon for a noble blow, 140  
Nor fear the vaunting of a mortal foe.

This said, and spirit breath'd into his breast,  
Thro' the thick troops th' embolden'd hero prest :  
His vent'rous act the white-arm'd Queen survey'd,  
And thus, assembling all the pow'rs, she said. 145

Behold an action, Gods ! that claims your care,  
Lo great Æneas rushing to the war ;  
Against Pelides he directs his course,  
Phœbus impels, and Phœbus gives him force.  
Restrain his bold career ; at least, t' attend 150  
Our favour'd hero, let some Pow'r descend.  
To guard his life, and add to his renown,  
We, the great armament of heav'n, came down.  
Hereafter let him fall, as Fates design,  
That spun so short his life's illustrious line : 155  
But left some adverse God now cross his way;  
Give him to know, what Pow'rs assist this da.  
For how shall mortal stand the dire alarms,  
When heav'n's resplendent host appear in arms ?

Thus she, and thus the God whose force can make  
The solid globe's eternal basis shake. 160



## Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD.

309

Against the might of man, so feeble known,  
Why should celestial pow'rs exert their own?  
Suffice, from yonder mount to view the scene;  
And leave to war the fates of mortal men.      165

But if th' Armipotent, or God of light,  
Obstruct Achilles, or commence the fight,  
Thence on the Gods of Troy we swift descend:  
Full soon, I doubt not, shall the conflict end;  
And these, in ruin and confusion hurl'd,      170  
Yield to our conq'ring arms the lower world.

Thus having said, the tyrant of the sea,  
Cærulean Neptune, rose, and led the way.  
Advanc'd upon the field there stood a mound  
Of earth congested, wall'd, and trench'd around;

v. 174. *Advanc'd upon the field there stood a mound, &c.]* It may not be unnecessary to explain this passage to make it understood by the reader: the poet is very short in the description, as supposing the fact already known, and has ~~g~~ens to the combat between Achilles and Æneas. This is very judicious in Homer not to dwell on a piece of history that had no relation to his action, when he has raised the reader's expectation by so pompous an introduction, and made the Gods themselves his spectators.

Tk. : story is as follows: Laomedon having defrauded Neptune of the reward he promised him for the building the walls of Troy, Neptune sent a monstrous whale, to which Laomedon exposed his daughter Hesione: but Hercules having undertaken to destroy the monster, the Trojans raised an intrenchment to defend Hercules from his pursuit: this being a remarkable piece of conduct in the



## 310 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

In elder times to guard Alcides made, 176  
(The work of Trojans, with Minerva's aid)  
What-time a vengeful monster of the main  
Swept the wide shore, and drove him to the plain.

Here Neptune, and the Gods of Greece repair, 180  
With clouds encompas'd, and a veil of air :  
The adverse pow'rs, around Apollo laid,  
Crown the fair hills that silver Simois shade.  
In circle close each heav'nly party sat,  
Intent to form the future scheme of Fate ; 185  
But mix not yet in fight, tho' Jove on high  
Gives the loud signal, and the heav'ns reply.

Trojans, it gave occasion to the poet to adorn a plain narration with fiction, by ascribing the work to Pallas the Goddess of wisdom. *Eustathius.*

v. 180. *Here Neptune, and the Gods, &c.]* I wonder why Eustathius and all other commentators should be silent upon this recess of the Gods: it seems strange at the first view, that so many Deities, after having entered the scene of action, should perform so short a part, and immediately become themselves spectators? I conceive the reason of this conduct in the poet to be, that Achilles has been inactive during the greatest part of the poem; & 't is as he is the hero of it, ought to be the chief character, in it: the poet therefore withdraws the Gods from the field, that Achilles may have the whole honour of the day, and act in subordination to the Deities: besides the poem draws to a conclusion, and it is necessary for Homer to enlarge upon the exploits of Achilles, that he may leave a noble idea of his valour upon the mind of the reader,



## Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD.

311

Meanwhile the rushing armies hide the ground ;  
The trampled center yields a hollow sound : 189  
Steeds cas'd in mail, and chiefs in armour bright,  
The gleamy champain glows with brazen light.  
Amid both hosts (a dreadful space) appear  
There, great Achilles ; bold Æneas, here.  
With tow'ring strides Æneas first advanc'd ;  
The nodding plumage on his helmet danc'd, 195  
Spread o'er his breast the fencing shield he bore,  
And, as he mov'd, his jav'lin flam'd before.  
Not so Pelides : furious to engage,  
He rush'd impetuous. Such the lion's rage,  
Who viewing first his foes with scornful eyes, 200  
Tho' all in arms the peopled city rife,  
Stalks careless on, with unregarding pride ;  
Till at the length by some brave youth defy'd,  
To his bold spear the savage turns alone,  
The murmurs fury with an hollow groan ; 205  
He grins, he foams, he rolls his eyes around  
Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides resound ;  
He call'd up all his rage ; he grinds his teeth,  
Resolv'd on vengeance, or resolv'd on death.  
So 'rce Achilles on Æneas flies ; 210  
So stands Æneas, and his force defies.  
E'er yet the stern encounter join'd, begun  
The seed of Thetis thus to Venus' son.



## 312 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XX.

Why comes Æneas thro' the ranks so far?  
Seeks he to meet Achilles' arm in war, 213

v. 214, &c. *The conversation of Achilles and Æneas.*] I shall lay before the reader the words of Eustathius in defence of this passage, which I confess seems to me to be faulty in the poet. The reader, (says he) would naturally expect some great and terrible achievements should ensue from Achilles on his first entrance upon action. The poet seems to prepare for it, by his magnificent introduction of him into the field: but instead of a storm, we have a calm; he follows the same method in this book as he did in the third, where when both armies were ready to engage in a general conflict, he ends the day in a single combat between two heroes: thus he always agreeably surprises his readers. Besides, the admirers of Homer reap a farther advantage from this conversation of the heroes: there is a chain of ancient history as well as a series of poetical beauties.

Madam Dacier's excuse is very little better: and to shew that this is really a fault in the poet, I believe I may appeal to the taste of every reader who certainly finds himself disappointed: our expectation is raised to see Gods and heroes engage, when suddenly it all sinks into such combat in which neither party receives a wound: and (what is more extraordinary) the Gods are made the spectators of so small an action! What occasion was there for thunder, earthquakes, and descending deities, to introduce a matter of so little importance? Neither is it any excuse to say he has given us a piece of ancient History; we expected to read a poet, not an historian. In ~~part~~ after the greatest preparation for action imaginable, he suspends the whole narration, and from the heat of a poet, cools at once into the simplicity of an historian.



In hope the realms of Priam to enjoy,  
And prove his merits to the throne of Troy ?  
Grant that beneath thy lance Achilles dies,  
The partial monarch may refuse the prize :  
Sons he has many : those thy pride may quell ; 220  
And 'tis his fault to love those sons too well.  
Or, in reward of thy victorious hand,  
Has Troy propos'd some spacious track of land ?  
An ample forest, or a fair domain,  
Of hills for vines, and arable for grain ? 225  
Ev'n this, perhaps, will hardly prove thy lot.  
But can Achilles be so soon forgot ?  
Once (as I think) you saw this brandish'd spear,  
And then the great Æneas seem'd to fear.  
With hearty haste from Ida's mount he fled, 230  
Nor, 'till he reach'd Lyrnessus, turn'd his head.  
Her lofty walls not long our progress staid ;  
Those, Pallas, Jove, and we, in ruins laid :  
In Grecian chains her captive race were cast ;  
'Tis true, the great Æneas fled too fast. 235  
Defrauded of my conquest once before,  
What then I lost, the Gods this day restore.  
Go ; while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate ;  
Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.

To this Anchises' son. Such words employ 240  
To one that fears thee, some unwarlike boy ;  
Such we disdain ; the best may be defy'd  
With mean reproaches, and unmanly pride ;



314. HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Unworthy the high race from which we came,  
Proclaim'd so loudly by the voice of fame : 245  
Each from illustrious fathers draws his line ;  
Each Goddess-born ; half human, half divine.  
Thetis' this day, or Venus' offspring dies,  
And tears shall trickle from celestial eyes :  
For when two heroes, thus deriv'd, contend, 250  
Tis not in words the glorious strife can end.  
If yet thou farther seek to learn my birth  
(A tale resounded thro' the spacious earth)  
Hear how the glorious origin we prove  
From ancient Dardanus, the first from Jove : 255  
Dardania's walls he rais'd ; for Ilion, then,  
(The city since of many-languag'd men)  
Was not. The natives were content to till  
The shady foot of Ida's fount-full hill,

v. 258. *The natives were content to till  
The shady foot of Ida's fount-full hill.]*

Κτίσσε δὲ Δαρδανίν, ἐπεὶ πεπονθότης  
Ἐπειδίν τε πόλιστο, πόλις μερόπων, Αἰθρέαπων.  
Ἄλλ' εἴ τις αὐτοῖς ὅκειν πολυπιδάκες Ιδης.

Plato and Strabo understand this passage as favouring the opinion that the mountainous parts of the world were first inhabited, after the universal deluge ; and that mankind by degrees descended to dwell in the lower parts of the hills (which they would have the word ὑπώσεια signify) and only in greater process of time ventured into the vallies : Virgil however seems to have taken this word in a sense something different where he alludes to this passage.  
Æn. iii. 109.



Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 315

From Dardanus, great Erichthonius springs, 260  
The richest, once, of Asia's wealthy kings ;  
Three thousand mares his spacious pastures bred,  
Three thousand foals beside their mothers fed.  
Boreas, enamour'd of the sprightly train,  
Conceal'd his godhead in a flowing mane, 265  
With voice dissembled to his loves he neigh'd,  
And cours'd the dappled beauties o'er the mead :  
Hence sprung twelve others of unrivall'd kind,  
Swift as their mother mares, and father wind. 269  
These lightly skimming, when they swept the plain,  
Nor ply'd the grass, nor bent the tender grain ;

" — — — Nondum Ilium & arces

" Pergameæ steterant, habitabant vallis imis."

v. 262. *Three thousand mares, &c.*] The number of the horses and mares of Erichthonius may seem incredible, were we not assured by Herodotus that there were in the stud of Cyrus at one time (besides those for the service of war) eight hundred horses and six thousand six hundred mares. *Eustathius.*

v. 264. *Boreas enamour'd, &c.*] Homer has the happiness of making the least circumstance considerable ; the subject grows under his hands, and the plainest matter shines in his dress of poetry : another poet would have said these horses were as swift as the wind, but Homer tells you that they sprung from Boreas the God of the wind ; and thence drew their swiftness.

v. 270. *These lightly skimming, when they swept the plain.*] The poet illustrates the swiftness of these horses by describing them as running over the standing corn, and sur-



316 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

And when along the level seas they flew,  
Scarce on the surface curl'd the briny dew.  
Such Erichthonius was : from him there came  
The sacred Tros, of whom the Trojan name. 275  
Three sons renown'd adorn'd his nuptial bed,  
Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymed :  
The matchless Ganymed, divinely fair,  
Whom Heav'n, enamour'd, snatch'd to upper air  
To bear the cup of Jove (æthereal guest, 280  
The grace and glory of th' ambrofial feast)

face of waters, without making any impression. Virgil has imitated these lines, and adapts what Homer says of these horses to the swiftness of Camilla, *AEn.* vii. 809.

“ Illa vel intactæ segetis per summa volaret  
“ Gramina ; nec teneras cursu læsisset aristas :  
“ Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumenti  
“ Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.”

The reader will easily perceive that Virgil's is almost a literal translation : he has imitated the very run of the verses, which flow nimbly away in dactyls, and as swiftly as the wind they describe.

I cannot but observe one thing in favour of Homer, that there can no greater commendation be given to him, than by considering the conduct of Virgil : who, though undoubtedly the greatest poet after him, seldom ventures to vary much from his original in the passages he takes from him, as in a despair of improving, and contented if he can but equal them.

v. 280. *To bear the cup of Jove.*] To be a cup-bearer has in all ages and nations been reckoned an honourable employment. Sappho mentions it in honour of her bro-



## Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD.

317

The two remaining sons the line divide :  
First rose Laomedon from Ilus' side ;  
From him Tithonus, now in cares grown old,  
And Priam, (blest with Hector, brave and bold :)  
Clytius and Lampus, ever-honour'd pair ;

286

And Hicetaon, thunderbolt of war.

From great Assaracus sprung Capys, he  
Begat Anchises, and Anchises me.

Such is our race: 'tis fortune gives us birth, 290  
But Jove alone endues the soul with worth :  
He, source of pow'r and might ! with boundless  
fway,

All human courage gives, or takes away.

Long in the field of words we may contend,  
Reproach is infinite, and knows no end, 295

Arm'd or with truth or falsehood, right or wrong ;

So voluble a weapon is the tongue ;

Wounded, we wound ; and neither side can fail,

For every man has equal strength to rail :

Women alone, when in the streets they jar, 300

Perhaps excel us in this wordy war ;

ther Labichus, that he was cup-bearer to the nobles of Mitylene : the son of Menelaus executed the same office ; Hebe and Mercury served the Gods in the same station.

It was the custom in the Pagan worship to employ noble youths to pour the wine upon the sacrifice : in this office Ganymed might probably attend upon the altar of Jupiter, and from thence was fabled to be his cup-bearer. *Eustathius:*



318 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XX.

Like us they stand, encompas'd with the croud,  
And vent their anger, impotent and loud.

Cease then—Our busines in the field of fight

Is not to question, but to prove our might.

305

To all those insults thou hast offer'd here,

Receive this answer : 'tis my flying spear.

He spoke. With all his force the jav'lin flung,  
Fix'd deep, and loudly in the buckler rung.

Far on his out-stretch'd arm, Pelides held 310  
(To meet the thund'ring lance) his dreadful shield,

That trembled as it stuck ; nor void of fear

Saw, e'er it fell, th' immeasurable spear.

His fears were vain ; impenetrable charms

Secur'd the temper of th' æthereal arms.

315

Thro' two strong plates the point its passage held,

But stopp'd, and rested, by the third repell'd.

Five plates of various metal, various mold,

Compos'd the shield ; of brass each outward fold,

Of tin each inward, and the middle gold : 320 }

There stuck the lance. Then rising e'er he threw,

The forceful spear of great Achilles flew,

And pierc'd the Dardan shield's extremest bound,

Where the shrill brass return'd a sharper sound :

Thro' the thin verge the Pelean weapon glides, 325

And the flight cov'ring of expanded hides.

Æneas his contracted body bends,

And o'er him high the riven targe extends,



Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 319

Sees, thro' its parting plates, the upper air,  
And at his back perceives the quiv'ring spear: 330  
A fate so near him chills his soul with fright;  
And swims before his eyes the many-colour'd light.  
Achilles, rushing in with dreadful cries,  
Draws his broad blade, and at Æneas flies:  
Æneas rousing as the foe came on, 335  
(With force collected) heaves a mighty stone:  
A mass enormous! which in modern days  
No two of earth's degen'rate sons could raise.  
But Ocean's God, whose earthquakes rock the  
ground, 339

Saw the distress, and mov'd the pow'rs around.

Lo ! on the brink of fate Æneas stands,  
An instant victim to Achilles' hands :  
By Phœbus urg'd ; but Phœbus has bestow'd  
His aid in vain : the man o'erpow'rs the God.  
And can ye see this righteous chief atone 345  
With guiltless blood, for vices not his own ?

v. 339. *But Ocean's God, &c.]* The conduct of the poet in making Æneas owe his safety to Neptune in this place is remarkable: Neptune is an enemy to the Trojans, yet he dares not suffer so pious a man to fall, lest Jupiter should be offended: this shews, says Eustathius, that piety is always under the protection of God; and that favours are sometimes conferred, not out of kindness, but to prevent a greater detriment; thus Neptune preserves Æneas, lest Jupiter should revenge his death upon the Grecians.

v. 345. *And can ye see this righteous chief, &c.]* Though Æneas is represented as a man of great courage, yet his



To all the Gods his constant vows were paid :  
Sure, tho' he wars for Troy, he claims our aid.

Fate wills not this ; nor thus can Jove resign  
The future father of the Dardan line :

350

The first great ancestor obtain'd his grace,  
And still his love descends on all the race.

For Priam now, and Priam's faithless kind,  
At length are odious to th' all-seeing Mind ;

355

On great Æneas shall devolve the reign,

And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.

piety is his most shining character : this is the reason why he is always the care of the Gods, and they favour him constantly through the whole poem with their immediate protection.

It is in this light that Virgil has presented him to the view of the reader : his valour bears but the second place in the *Æneis*. In the *Ilias* indeed he is drawn in miniature, and in the *Æneis* at full length ; but there are the same features in the copy, which are in the original, and he is the same *Æneas* in Rome as he was in Troy.

v. 355. *On great Æneas shall devolve the reign,  
And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.]*

The story of *Æneas*'s founding the Roman empire, gave Virgil the finest occasion imaginable of paying a compliment to Augustus, and his countrymen, who were fond of being thought the descendants of Troy. He has translated these two lines literally, and put them in the nature of a prophecy ; as the favourers of the opinion w<sup>t</sup> *Æneas*'s sailing into Italy, imagine Homer's to be.

— — — Αἰνείας δὲ τρώοςσιν ἀνέξει  
καὶ ωδεῖς ωδῶν τοῖς νεο μελόμεσθε γέννανται.



## Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 321

The great Earth-shaker thus : to whom replies  
Th' imperial Goddess with the radiant eyes.

" *Hic domus Aeneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,*  
" *Et nati natorum & qui nascentur ab illis.*"

There has been a very ancient alteration made (as Strabo observes) in these two lines, by substituting *natūrātū* in the room of *nascētū*. It is not improbable but Virgil might give occasion for it, by his *cunctis dominabitur oris*.

Eustathius does not entirely discountenance this story : if it be understood, says he, as a prophecy, the poet might take it from the Sibylline oracles. He farther remarks, that the poet artfully interweaves into his poem not only the things which happened before the commencement, and in the prosecution of the Trojan war ; but other matters of importance which happened even after that war was brought to a conclusion. Thus for instance, we have here a piece of history not extant in any other author, by which we are informed that the house of Aeneas succeeded to the crown of Troas, and to the kingdom of Priam. *Eustathius.*

This passage is very considerable, for it ruins the famous chimæra of the Roman empire, and of the family of the Cæsars, who both pretended to deduce their original from Venus by Aeneas, alledging that after the taking of Troy, Aeneas came into Italy : and this pretension is hereby actually destroyed. This testimony of Homer ought to be looked upon as an authentick act, the fidelity and verity thereof cannot be questioned. Neptune, as much an enemy as he is to the Trojans, declares that Aeneas, and after him his posterity, shall reign over the Trojans. Would Homer have put this prophecy in Neptune's mouth, if he had not known that Aeneas did not leave Troy, but that he reigned there, and if he had not



Good as he is, to immolate or spare  
The Dardan Prince, O Neptune, be thy care ; 360

seen in his time the descendants of that prince reign there likewise? That poet wrote two hundred and sixty years, or thereabouts, after the taking of Troy; and what is very remarkable, he wrote in some of the towns of Ionia, that is to say, in the neighbourhood of Phrygia; so that the time and place gave such a weight to his deposition that nothing can invalidate it. All that the historians have written concerning Æneas's voyage into Italy, ought to be considered as a romance, made on purpose to destroy all historical truth; for the most antient of them is posterior to Homer by some ages. Before Dionysius of Halicarnassus, some writers being sensible of the strength of this passage of Homer, undertook to explain it so as to reconcile it with this fable: and they said that Æneas, after having been in Italy, returned to Troy, and left his son Ascanius there. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, little satisfied with this solution, which did not seem to him to be probable, has taken another method: he would have it that by these words, "He shall reign over the Trojans," Homer meant he shall reign over the Trojans whom he shall carry with him into Italy. "For is it not possible, says he, that Æneas should reign over the Trojans, whom he had taken with him, though settled elsewhere?"

That historian, who wrote in Rome itself, and in the reign of Augustus, was willing to make his court to that prince, by explaining this passage of Homer, so as to favour the chimæra he was possessed with. And this is a reproach that may with some justice be cast on him; for poets may by their fictions flatter princes and welcome: it is their trade. But for historians to corrupt the gravity and severity of history, to substitute fable in the place of truth, is what ought not to be pardoned. Strabo was much more scrupulous, for though he wrote his books of



Book XX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 323

Pallas and I, by all that Gods can bind,  
Have sworn destruction to the Trojan kind ;  
Not ev'n an instant to protract their fate,  
Or save one member of the sinking state ; 364  
'Till her last flame be quench'd with her last 'gore,  
And ev'n her crumbling ruins are no more.

The King of Ocean to the fight descends,  
Thro' all the whistling darts his course he bends,  
Swift interpos'd between the warriours flies,  
And casts thick darkness o'er Achilles' eyes. 370  
From great Æneas' shield the spear he drew,  
And at its master's feet the weapon threw.  
That done, with force divine he snatch'd on high  
The Dardan prince, and bore him thro' the sky,  
Smooth-gliding without step, above the heads 375  
Of warring heroes, and of bounding steeds :  
'Till at the battle's utmost verge they light,  
Where the slow Caucans close the rear of fight.

ography towards the beginning of Tiberius's reign, yet he had the courage to give a right explication to this passage of Homer, and to aver, that this poet said, and meant, that Æneas remained at Troy, that he reigned therein, Priam's whole race being extinguished, and that ~~not~~ left the kingdom to his children after him, lib. xiii. You may see this whole matter discussed in a letter from Mr. Bochart to Mr. de Segrais, who has prefixed it to his remarks upon the translation of Virgil.

v. 378. *Where the slow Caucans close the rear.]* The Caucanes (says Eustathius) were of Paphlagonian extract :



The Godhead there (his heav'nly form confess'd)  
With words like these the panting chief address'd. 380

What pow'r, O prince, with force inferiour far  
Urg'd thee to meet Achilles' arm in war ?  
Henceforth beware, nor antedate thy doom,  
Defrauding Fate of all thy fame to come.  
But when the day decreed (for come it must) 385  
Shall lay this dreadful hero in the dust,

and this perhaps was the reason why they are not distinctly mentioned in the catalogue, they being included under the general name of Paphlagonians: though two lines are quoted which are said to have been left out by some transcriber, and immediately followed this,

Κράμναν τ' Αίγιαλόντες καὶ οὐκλάνες Ἐρυθίνας.

Which verses are these,

Καύκωνας αὖτ' ἦγε πολυκλέος νιὸς Ἀριόμαντος.

Or as others read it, "Αριόμαντος."

Οἱ περὶ παρθένου πολεμὸν κλυτὰ δώματα ἔνεισον:

Or according to others,

Κατὰ δώματα ἔνεισον.

Yet we believe these are not Homer's lines, but rather the addition of some transcriber, and it is evident by consulting the passage from which they are said to have been cut-tailed, that they would be absurd in that place; for the second line is actually there already; and as these Caucons are said to live upon the banks of the Parthenius, so are the Paphlagonians in the above-mentioned passage. It is therefore more probable that the Caucons are included in the Paphlagonians.



## Book XX. HOMER'S ILIAD.

325

Let then the furies of that arm be known,  
Secure, no Grecian force transcends thy own.

With that, he left him wond'ring as he lay,  
Then from Achilles chas'd the mist away :  
Sudden, returning with the stream of light,  
The scene of war came rushing on his sight.

Then thus amaz'd: What wonders strike my mind!  
My spear, that parted on the wings of wind,  
Laid here before me ! and the Dardan lord  
That fell this instant, vanish'd from my sword !  
I thought alone with mortals to contend,  
But Pow'r's coelestial sure this foe defend.

Great as he is, our arm he scarce will try,  
Content, for once, with all his Gods, to fly.

Now then let others bleed—This said, aloud  
He vents his fury, and inflames the crowd,

O Greeks, (he cries, and ev'ry rank alarms)  
Join battle, man to man, and arms to arms !

"Tis not in me, tho' favour'd by the sky,  
To mow whole troops and make whole armies fly :

No God can singly such a host engage,  
Not Mars himself, nor great Minerva's rage  
But whatsoe'er Achilles can inspire,

Whate'er of active force, or acting fire :  
Whate'er this heart can prompt, or hand obey ;

All, all Achilles, Greeks ! is yours to-day.

Thro' yon' wide host this arm shall scatter fear,  
And thin the squadrons with my single spear.



326 HOMER's ILIAD. Book XX.

He said: nor less elate with martial joy, 415  
The god-like Hector warm'd the troops of Troy.  
Trojans to war! Think Hector leads you on;  
Nor dread the vaunts of Peleus' haughty son.  
Deeds must decide our fate. Ev'n those with words  
Insult the brave, who tremble at their swords: 420  
The weakest Atheist-wretch all Heav'n defies,  
But shrinks and shudders, when the thunder flies.  
Nor from yon boaster shall your chief retire,  
Not tho' his heart were steel, his hands were fire;  
That fire, that steel, your Hector should withstand,  
And brave that vengeful heart, that dreadful hand.

Thus (breathing rage thro' all) the hero said;  
A wood of lances rises round his head,  
Clamours on clamours tempest all the air, 429  
They join, they throng, they thicken to the war.  
But Phœbus warns him from high heav'n to shun  
The single fight with Thetis' god-like son;  
More safe to combat in the mingled band,  
Nor tempt too near the terrors of his hand.  
He hears, obedient to the God of light, 435  
And g'd within the ranks, awaits the fight.

Then fierce Achilles, shouting to the skies,  
On Troy's whole force with boundless fury flies.  
First falls Iphytion, at his army's head;  
Brave was the chief, and brave the host he led; 440  
From great Otryntcus he deriv'd his blood,  
His mother was a Nai's of the flood;



Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 327

Beneath the shades of Tmolus, crown'd with snow,  
From Hyde's walls he rul'd the lands below.  
Fierce as he springs, the sword his head divides ;  
The parted visage falls on equal sides : 446  
With loud-resounding arms he strikes the plain ;  
While thus Achilles glories o'er the slain.

Lie there Otryntides ! the Trojan earth  
Receives thee dead, tho' Gygæ boast thy birth ; 450  
Those beauteous fields where Hyllus' waves are roll'd,  
And plenteous Hermus swells with tides of gold,  
Are thine no more—Th' insulting hero said,  
And left him sleeping in eternal shade.  
The rolling wheels of Greece the body tore, 455  
And dash'd their axles with no vulgar gore.

Demoleon next, Antenor's offspring, laid  
Breathless in dust, the price of rashness paid.  
Th' impatient steel with full-descending sway  
Forc'd thro' his brazen helm its furious way. 460  
Resistless drove the batter'd skull before,  
And sh'd and mingled all the brains with gore.  
This sees Hippodamas, and seiz'd with fright,  
Deserts his chariot for a swifter flight :  
The lance arrests him : an ignoble wound 465  
The panting Trojan rivets to the ground.  
He groans away his soul : not louder roars  
At Neptune's shrine on Helice's high shores

v. 467. — — — Not louder roars

[At Neptune's shrine on Helice's high shores, &c.]

In Helice, a town of Achaia, three quarters of a league



## 318 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

The victim bull : the rocks rebellow round,  
And Ocean listens to the grateful sound. 476

Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage,  
The youngest hope of Priam's stooping age :

from the gulph of Corinth, Neptune had a magnificent temple, where the Ionians offered every year to him a sacrifice of a bull ; and it was with these people an auspicious sign, and a certain mark that the sacrifice would be accepted, if the bull bellowed as he was led to the altar. After the Ionick migration, which happened about one hundred and forty years after the taking of Troy, the Ionians of Asia assembled in the fields of Priene to celebrate the same festival in honour of Heliconian Neptune ; and as those of Priene valued themselves upon being originally of Helice, they chose for the king of the sacrifice a young Prienian. It is needless to dispute from whence the poet has taken his comparison ; for as he lived a hundred, or a hundred and twenty-one years after the Ionick migration, it cannot be doubted but he took it in the Asian Ionia, and at Priene itself ; where he had probably often assisted at that sacrifice, and been witness of the ceremony therein observed. This poet always appears strongly addicted to the customs of the Ionians, which makes some conjecture that he was an Ionian himself. *Euphrathus. Dac.*

v. [Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage.] Euripides in his Hecuba has followed another tradition, when he makes Polydorus the son of Priam and of Hecuba, and slain by Polymnestor king of Thrace, after the taking of Troy ; for according to Homer, he is not the son of Hecuba, but of Laothoë, as he says in the following book, and is slain by Achilles. Virgil too has rather chosen to follow Euripides than Homer.



Book XX. HOMER's ILIAD. 329

(Whose feet for swiftness in the race surpass)

Of all his sons, the dearest, and the last.

To the forbidden field he takes his flight 475

In the first folly of a youthful knight,

To vaunt his swiftness wheels around the plain,

But vaunts not long, with all his swiftness slain.

Struck where the crossing belts unite behind,

And golden rings the double back-plate join'd : 480

Forth thro' the navel burst the thrilling steel ;

And on his knees with piercing shrieks he fell ;

The rushing entrails pour'd upon the ground

His hands collect ; and darkness wraps him round.

When Hector view'd, all ghastly in his gore 485

Thus sadly slain, th' unhappy Polydore ;

A cloud of sorrow overcast his sight,

His soul no longer brook'd the distant fight,

Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came,

And shook his jav'lin like a waving flame. 490

[489. *Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came.*] The great merit of the poet in keeping the character of his hero, is in this place very evident: when Achilles was to engage Æneas, he holds a long conference with him, and with patience bears the reply of Æneas: nad he pursued the same method with Hector, he had departed from his character. Anger is the prevailing passion in Achilles: he left the field in a rage against Agamemnon, and entered it again to be revenged of Hector: the poet therefore judiciously makes him take fire at the sight of his enemy: he describes him as impatient to kill him, he gives him a haughty challenge, and that challenge is compre-



330 H O M E R's I L I A D. Book XX

The son of Peleus sees, with joy possest,  
His heart high-bounding in his rising breast :  
And, lo ! the man, on whom black fates attend ;  
The man, that flew Achilles, in his friend !  
No more shall Hector's and Pelides spear      495  
Turn from each other in the walks of war—  
Then with revengeful eyes he scann'd him o'er :  
Come, and receive thy fate ! He spake no more.

Hector, undaunted, thus. Such words employ  
To one that dreads thee, some unwarlike boy : 500  
Such we could give, defying and defy'd,  
Mean intercourse of obloquy and pride !  
I know thy force to mine superiour far ;  
But Heav'n alone confers success in war :  
Mean as I am, the Gods may guide my dart,      505  
And give it ent'rance in a braver heart.

Then parts the lance : but Pallas' heav'nly breath  
Far from Achilles wafts the winged death :  
The bidden dart again to Hector flies,  
And at the feet of its great master lies.      510  
Achilles closes with his hated foe,  
His ~~languid~~ eyes with flaming fury glow :  
But present to his aid, Apollo shrouds  
The favour'd hero in a veil of clouds.

Hended in a single line : his impatience to be revenged,  
would not suffer him to delay it by a length of words.

v. 513. *But present to his aid, Apollo]* It is a common observation, that a God should never be introduced into a



**Book XX. H O M E R's I L I A D.** 331

**Thrice struck Pelides with indignant heart,** 515  
**Thrice in impassive air he plung'd the dart:**  
**The spear a fourth time bury'd in the cloud;**  
**He foams with fury, and exclaims aloud.**

**Wretch ! thou hast 'scap'd again, once more thy flight**

**Has fav'd thee, and the partial God of Light.** 520  
**But long thou shalt not thy just fate withstand,**  
**If any power assist Achilles' hand.**  
**Fly then inglorious ! but thy flight this day**  
**Whole hecatombs of Trojan ghosts shall pay.**

**With that, he gluts his rage on numbers slain :**  
**Then Dryops tumbled to th' ensanguin'd plain,** 526  
**Pierc'd thro' the neck : he left him panting there,**  
**And stopp'd Demuchus, great Philetor's heir,**  
**Gigantick chief ! deep gash'd th' enormous blade,**  
**And for the soul an ample passage made.** 530

post but where his presence is necessary. And it may be asked why the life of Hector is of such importance that Apollo should rescue him from the hand of Achilles here, and yet suffer him to fall so soon after ? Eustathius answers, that the poet had not yet sufficiently exalted the valour of Achilles, he takes time to enlarge upon his achievements, and rises by degrees in his character, till he completes both his courage and resentment at one blow in the death of Hector. And the poet, adds he, pays a great compliment to his favourite countryman, by shewing that nothing but the intervention of a God could have saved Æneas and Hector from the hand of Achilles.



232

## HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Laogonus and Dardanus expire,  
The valiant sons of an unhappy sire ;  
Both in one instant from the chariot hurl'd,  
Sunk in one instant to the nether world ;  
This diff'rence only their sad fates afford,      535  
That one the spear destroy'd, and one the sword.

Nor less un pity'd, young Alastor bleeds ;  
In vain his youth, in vain his beauty pleads :  
In vain he begs thee with a suppliant's moan,  
To spare a form, an age so like thy own !      540  
Unhappy boy ! no pray'r, no moving art,  
E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart !  
While yet he trembled at his knees, and cry'd,  
The ruthless falchion ope'd his tender side ;  
The panting liver pours a flood of gore      545  
That drowns his bosom 'till he pants no more.

¶. 541. — — — *No pray'r, no moving art,*  
*E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart ! ]*

I confess it is a satisfaction to me, to observe what art the poet pursues his subject : the opening of the poem professes to treat of the anger of Achilles ; that anger draws on all the great events of the story : and Homer, at every opportunity awakens the reader to an attention to it, by mentioning the effects of it : so that when we see in this place the hero deaf to youth and compassion, it is what we expect : mercy in him would offend, because it is contrary to his character. Homer proposes him not as a pattern for imitation ; but the moral of the poem which he designed the reader should draw from it, is, that we should avoid anger, since it is ever pernicious in the event.



Book XX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 333

Thro' Mulius' head then drove th' impetuous spear,  
The warriour falls, transfix'd from ear to ear.  
Thy life, Echeclus ! next the sword bereaves,  
Deep thro' the front the pond'rous falchion cleaves ;  
Warm'd in the brain the smoking weapon lies, 551  
The purple death comes floating o'er his eyes.

Then brave Decaulion dy'd : the dart was flung  
Where the knit nerves the pliant elbow strung ;  
He dropt his arm, an unaffliting weight, 555  
And stood all impotent, expecting fate :

Full on his neck the falling falchion sped,  
From his broad shoulders hew'd his crested head:  
Forth from the bone the spinal marrow flies,  
And sunk in dust, the corpse extended lies. 560

Rhigmus, whose race from fruitful Thracia came,  
(The son of Pireus, an illustrious name,)  
Succeeds to fate : the spear his belly rends ;  
Prone from his car the thund'ring chief descends :

The squire, who saw expiring on the ground 565  
His ~~po~~ master, rein'd the steeds around :  
His back scarce turn'd, the Pelian jav'lin gor'd,  
And stretch'd the servant o'er his dying lord  
As when a flame the winding valley fills,  
And runs-on crackling shrubs between the hills; 570  
Then o'er the stubble up the mountain flies,  
Fires the high woods, and blazes to the skies,  
This way and that the spreading torrent roars ;  
So sweeps the hero thro' the wasted shores :



## 334 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XX.

Around him wide, immense destruction pours, 575  
And earth is delug'd with the sanguine show'rs.  
As with autumnal harvests cover'd o'er,  
And thick besrown, lies Ceres' sacred floor;  
When round and round with never-weary'd pain,  
The trampling steers beat out th' unnumber'd grain:  
So the fierce coursers, as the chariot rolls, 581  
Tread down wh'le ranks, and crush out heroes souls.  
Dash'd from their hoofs while o'er the dead they fly,  
Black, bloody drops the smoking chariot dye :

v. 580. *The trampling steers beat out the un-number'd grain.*] In Greece, instead of threshing the corn as we do, they caused it to be trod out by oxen; this was likewise practised in Judea, as is seen by the law of God, who forbade the Jews to muzzle the ox who trod out the corn. *Non ligabis os bovis terentis in area fruges tuas.* Deut. xxv. Dacier,

The same practice is still preserved among the Turks and modern Greeks.

*The similes at the end.]* It is usual with our author to heap his similes very thick together at the conclusion of a book. He has done the same in the seventeenth — the natural discharge of a vast imagination, ~~heat~~ in its progress, and giving itself vent in this croud of images.

I cannot close the notes upon this book, without observing the dreadful idea of Achilles, which the poet leaves upon the mind of the reader. He drives his chariot over shields, and mangled heaps of slain : the wheels, the axle-tree, and the horses are stained with blood, the hero's eyes burn with fury, and his hands are red with slaughter. A painter might form from this passage the picture of Mars in the fulness of his terrors, as well as Phidias said to have drawn from another, that of Jupiter in his majesty.



**Book XX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 335**

The spiky wheels thro' heaps of carnage tore ; 585  
And thick the groaning axles dropp'd with gore.  
High o'er the scene of death Achilles stood,  
All grim with dust, all horrible in blood :  
Yet still insatiate, still with rage on flame ;  
Such is the lust of never-dying fame ! 590

**END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.**